

# **2022 LCDP Spring Election Voter Information Guide**

All candidates running in La Crosse County were invited to fill out our questionnaire. These are the answers of those who responded.

This guide is NOT a list of endorsements, as all candidates were allowed to participate. This guide is solely to help LCDP and the La Crosse County Community make decisions about the 2022 Spring election.

If you have any questions about the questionnaire, the La Crosse County Democratic Party or the 2022 Spring election, feel free to email William Garcia, chair of the La Crosse County Democratic Party, at [chair@laxdems.com](mailto:chair@laxdems.com).

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# County Board of Supervisors Candidates

<p>District 1 Joe Konradt Pelli Lee - No response</p>	<p>District 11 Patrick Scheller - No Response</p>	<p>District 21 Rob Abraham Vicki Burke</p>
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<p>District 3 Barb Janssen David Pierce -</p>	<p>District 13 Tina Tryggestad - No Response</p>	<p>District 23 Matt Nikolay - No Response</p>
<p>District 4 Maureen Freedland</p>	<p>District 14 Margaret Larson - No Response</p>	<p>District 24 Kevin Hoyer - No Response Kristie Tweed</p>
<p>District 5 Grant Mathu Megan Pauley - No Response</p>	<p>District 15 Monica Kruse Heidi Worminghaus</p>	<p>District 25 Dennis Jake Jacobsen - No response Betty Sacia - No Response</p>
<p>District 6 Roger J. Plesha - No Response</p>	<p>District 16 Dan Ferries - No Response</p>	<p>District 26 David H. Hundt - No Response Troy Gunderson</p>
<p>District 7 - Primary required Ellie McLoone Gary W. Padesky Sharon Hampson</p>	<p>District 17 Mike Giese Jack Pogreba - No response</p>	<p>District 27 Dan Hesse - No Response</p>
<p>District 8 Peg Isola - No Response</p>	<p>District 18 Mike Baroni - No response</p>	<p>District 28 Guy Valiquette - No response Karen L. Keil</p>
<p>District 9 Dawn Wacek Chris Woodard</p>	<p>District 19 Hubert Hoffman - No Response Rick Cornforth</p>	<p>District 29 Tom Jacobs - No Response Ken Schlimgen - No Response</p>
<p>District 10 Kim Cable - No Response Richard Korish - No Response</p>	<p>District 20 Jordan R. Briskey- No Response Steve Doyle - No Response</p>	<p>District 30 Dustin Frost - No Response Dillon Mader</p>

**Name: Joe Konradt**

Council District: County Board District 1

Current Employment: Retired

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: Still under development.

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I have aspired to running for public office since majoring in Political Science and Economics many years ago in college. At his point in my life I have the time and experience to contribute to effective government. Working 34 years in the banking industry and managing a large organization, I have the experience to work with a large budget and many dedicated public employees.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

As I mentioned above, I had a long career in banking and have developed strong financial and analysis skills. I also worked with leading and motivating a large team of employees. The County is like a large business. Our County budget is close to 37 million dollars and we employ hundreds of people. I spent many years learning the skills to work with this complex of an organization and I would like to put that experience to work for our community.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Three primary concerns: 1. To cost effectively deliver the primary, critical services that we depend on our government to provide. The stuff that isn't glamorous but we all depend on every day. 2. To maximize the utilization of tax dollars. Whether you rent or own a home, you are still paying property taxes. You depend upon your elected officials to make sure you get the most for your money. 3. More than just keeping the lights on, as good citizens we need to feel a sense of responsibility to help others. We need to address fairness and opportunity for everyone. Collectively we have a responsibility to ensure that everyone in our community has the quality of life that we all aspire to.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

All tax dollars are coming from somebody's personal checking account. Real people provide those funds. We need to make sure we are addressing the basic role of government first. Next we need to identify effective opportunities to provide the most benefit to our community. There will always be more need than we can satisfy. Are we using our dollars effectively? Are we more worried about winning awards and having bragging rights about being the "first" or are we about helping people? Improvement can be measured. If we develop plans and then follow up to see if we achieved our goals,

we will continually get better at our efforts. We need a discipline of having clear goals and validation of our success.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

The district that I will serve on the County Board is very close to the same as the La Crosse Common Council, so I can look at issues that affect both. My biggest frustration is that people in the city of La Crosse pay very high taxes (both renters and home owners) for services that benefit the whole county. Why does the city, mostly by themselves, pay for the La Crosse Center, the airport, and even more importantly to help the homeless.

Homelessness is one of those basic societal issues where collectively we need to help those members of our community that are most vulnerable. The city happens to be the place where homelessness is most visible largely because it is where social services agencies are located, and where open public areas are available. That does not mean that people living in Onalaska, Holmen, West Salem, and throughout the county have no responsibility. Everyone should be paying their fair share! Someone on the County Board needs to bring these issues forward; it will not happen on its own.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I believe I have a somewhat unique dual focus of shared fiscal responsibility, while at the same time achieving meaningful improvement in the quality of life for our community. I would like to put my skills to work to help ensure: we spend our tax dollars efficiently, that everyone pays their fair share, and that we achieve meaningful improvement in the lives of our citizens.

**Name: Ralph Pete Geary**

Council District District 2

Current Employment: Retired, PT City Brewery Teamsters Local 695

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: rg4819@yahoo.com or Phone 608-519-6175

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I want to help make LaCrosse County a better place to work, grow and live in. I want to stay as part of the process that revitalizes LaCrosse County.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I worked my way thru college (U.W.-L. - Bachelor of Science) and (U.W.-Madison - M.B.A.)

I have been in business for myself as well as belonging to a union. I also serve on many community organizations. These life experiences have helped me greatly in my role as a County Board Supervisor. I am also a lifelong resident of the northside of LaCrosse.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

LaCrosse County has many functions along with many priorities. It would be difficult to single one out. Some, but not all of our priorities, deal with the pandemic, addiction, homelessness, roads, law enforcement, human services, flood plain issues and the list continues to grow.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

LaCrosse County, like most counties, is at the levy limits. We strive to maintain and improve upon our existing services as well as addressing new priorities. We build a budget with input from the staff, the public, and our committees. We adopt a budget that best allocates funds in addressing our priorities and the many needs of LaCrosse county. In addition to that, many services we provide are mandated and have to be addressed in the budget. Recently we prioritized use of the ARPA funds. We could also allocate money to collaborate with the City of LaCrosse to remove homes from the floodplain.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

I would like to see more regionalization of services as we move forward. We have to work with our neighboring communities and build better relationships. We need to find common ground on how to fix concerns in an open and honest manner. Hopefully this will lead to better problem solving and solutions that will lead to a more efficient and

cost effective delivery of services. The end result is always for better services for the residents of LaCrosse county.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

When making decisions I try to gather all the facts, ask questions for clarification, and find workable solutions that benefit the people of LaCrosse county. I work well with many community groups. Some of the groups I belong to are American Legion Post 336, Logan Northside Neighborhood - Chairman, HJO Senior Center - Board of Directors, Teamsters Local 695, Logan Booster Club, and Trinity Lutheran church. I am a lifelong resident of the northside of LaCrosse and want to help revitalize our region by remaining the LaCrosse County Supervisor for District 2.

**Name: Tracy Littlejohn**

Council District District 2

Current Employment: Ho-Chunk Nation Youth Services

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100076990598440>

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

As a low-income woman of color, I believe I bring a new perspective to the Board that needs to be included when making decisions

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I've been involved in many Boards and Committees as well as tribal government and Uw-System politics.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

To ensure that all policies and processes are equitable and inclusive for all residents.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

I believe the current and past Board have done a phenomenal job at determining priorities while still lowering the budget.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

I would like to see greater diversity in the workforce as well as within elected positions. My intention is to find ways to make these areas more inviting for marginalized populations.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I have lived in La Crosse for 43 of my 48 years. My ancestors called this area home before European settlers and I have a special love for this place that many residents do not have the privilege of having despite how long their family has lived here.

**Name: David Pierce**

Council District: 3

Current Employment: Attorney

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

davidpierceforcountyboard@gmail.com

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I want to provide the county board with a fresh progressive voice. For my district, my priorities would include continued protection of the marsh, helping property owners harmed by the flood plain, revitalizing neighborhoods that have numerous abandoned/unmaintained houses, additional public investment in the Lower Northside of La Crosse, and protecting tenants from landlords that do not treat their tenants lawfully.

For the County as a whole, I would advocate for additional public and private development of local renewable resources, namely solar panels, on new and existing buildings. I support continued efforts to clean up the drinking water sources and seeking remediation costs from the offending corporations.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

As an attorney, my job is to advocate for the best interests of the individuals that I represent. I would use those same skills to advocate for individuals in my district and for others in the County.

Much of my practice is dedicated to landlord-tenant issues and criminal defense. As a landlord-tenant lawyer, I know the tricks of the trade that unscrupulous landlords use to make the largest profit possible while failing to act properly. The unfortunate reality is that the County has little role in creating ordinances for landlords, but I do believe the County could do more to hold landlords that are not complying with local ordinances more accountable.

In my role as a criminal defense lawyer, I have seen many of the pros and cons of the criminal justice system in this County and neighboring counties. The good news--we are ahead of neighboring counties in some areas, such as the Drug Treatment programs. That said, I would like to see more voluntary programming made available to individuals on bond that want to get treatment while contesting the crime alleged. The County has to make more progress as it relates to quality policing, especially for our neighbors that are persons of color. Our communities of color are more heavily targeted for policing and are not provided many of the same diversion opportunities. I believe there should be County research on disparate sentencing that occurs for white versus non-white persons for the same offenses. I am a supporter of safe and accountable



policing, and I would advocate for an oversight committee that would allow for improper policing to be held accountable. Finally, the court appointment process in La Crosse County is not effective and results in too many people on bond going too long without an attorney, which causes delays in potential treatment.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

It would be improper for me to answer this question without addressing homelessness because treating the homeless and unsheltered population is a simple matter of human dignity. In the short term, homelessness is one of the more pressing issues in our community. The County and local municipalities need to work to solve the problem of homelessness in a humane and responsible manner.

The long-term goal of addressing the effects and taking action to slow down climate change has to be a top priority of the County Board. Many of my neighbors, including myself, are burdened by the flood plain and are potentially at risk for future flooding events exacerbated by climate change. The County needs to do its part to help mitigate the damage that will be caused by climate change disaster by acting now. In addition, we need to invest in renewable resources both on public and private property.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

As was indicated by a County survey just a few months ago, our taxpayers want to see increased investment in renewable and sustainable energy. I would advocate for such investment. In addition, local families have a crisis of not being able to afford quality childcare. The County should explore any role it can play in helping families financially or helping to foster new businesses to meet the need in the market.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

La Crosse County is already a great place to live, work, and recreate. The County Board has a role in making the County a better place to do all of those things.

Great place to live: As indicated above, I would advocate for policies and programs that make La Crosse environmentally friendly, easier to raise a family, and safer. For the reasons stated above regarding homelessness, I would advocate for swift and hopefully long-term solutions while collaborating with local municipalities. I would push for policies that protect homeowners and tenants alike so that living in La Crosse is affordable and safe.

Great place to work: The County Board has a role in helping small businesses grow and flourish to help provide good paying jobs that make people want to reside here and

having a role in training workers to work at our local, good paying businesses. The County, in conjunction with several existing nonprofits, should continue trying to connect low wage workers with the skills necessary to work at good paying local jobs.

Great place to recreate: The County Board has a role in enhancing the use and protection of the County's natural assets (bluffs, rivers, trails, etc.). While we certainly need to protect these resources, it is important to make La Crosse a great place for residents and visitors to use these resources in order to help our community businesses and individuals.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I grew up on a small dairy farm in Monroe County, so I am a transplant to La Crosse County but I am local to Western Wisconsin. I have been a homeowner on the north side for several years and am a shareholder at a local law firm (Johns, Flaherty & Collins). I am committed to making La Crosse a better place for all.

**Name: Maureen Freedland**

Council District La Crosse County Board District 4

Current Employment: La Crosse County Board of Supervisors; pro bono legal work

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

maureenfreedland@gmail.com (no website)

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I initially ran for County Board so that I could help enact policy solutions to injustices I saw as a Legal Aid lawyer, and I've continued to seek reelection to maintain a strong progressive local voice.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I have been involved in justice work virtually my entire lifetime, starting as a teenager growing up in the deep South observing discrimination. My paid and pro bono legal work through my career has been almost entirely devoted to working with people who are not getting a fair shake including from institutional systems. I believe firmly that government must be pro-active and even assertive in eliminating barriers to injustice and responding in real ways to economic injustice by access to adequate food, housing and more. Some of the organizations I've been involved with in the La Crosse area over the last 27 years that work toward these goals include the La Crosse Public Education Foundation (President), La Crosse Jail Ministry (President), Midwest Environmental Advocates (Vice President of Board), and Couleecap, Inc. (Vice President of Board).

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Environmental injustice (reflecting my commitment to County Board efforts to 1. eliminate racism as a public health crisis, and 2. tackle environmental sustainability issues).

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

We have put in Resolution form important goals for carbon neutrality by 2030 and 2050, and we must effectuate them through maximum allocation of funds. The enormous cost of major infrastructure work such as the PFAS situation on French Island mostly needs federal dollars (requiring us to work to elect the right leaders to our federal and the state legislature but even the County Board) but we must support requests with feasibility and engineering studies, and whatever allows us to get major grants such as RAISE grants to move forward. The County budget should also be used to spur community participation in anti-fossil fuel, energy efficiency measures. We must preserve our Mississippi River bluff lands with regional planning to protect our ecosystems, recreation and long-term use. Economic development including regional

housing assistance and revitalized neighborhoods is another budget goal for me in 2022 and beyond. In general, we need the budget to prioritize work for the human, social and environmental needs of the community.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

The vision for the county I try to move toward is echoed in the words of former candidate for President, Pete Buttigieg. I repeated them in my annual letter to residents in my District last year:

“Politics at its worst is ugly. But at its best, politics can lift us up. It is not just policymaking. It is moral. It is soul craft...in our time, we can and will make American life in politics more like what it could be. Not just more wise and more prosperous, but more equitable and more just and more decent.”

My goal in serving on the La Crosse County board is always to meet this challenge.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

Thank you for your support. I will always work my hardest, and be available and responsive to you. I especially thank my many fellow friends in the La Crosse County Democratic Party. I am grateful for your work.

**Name: Grant Mathu**

Council District District #5 (UWL's campus and the surrounding neighborhood)

Current Employment: Current La Crosse County Supervisor and UWL student

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: Feel free to contact me with any campaign related inquiries at mathu9596@uwlax.edu

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I'm running for re-election on April 5th to ensure that the La Crosse County Board continues to listen to the needs of students and younger members of our community. We want affordable housing, a clean environment, and access to quality education...and I am committed to advocating for policies that will make those things into a reality. If you live on (or near) UWL's campus, please support my candidacy at the polls on April 5th!

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

My two years of service on the La Crosse County Board have equipped me with valuable insight into how local government can be a positive force in our community. Since being elected, I have taken a number of votes to protect our environment, promote our local economy, and support UWL students and renters. I will continue to use my experience to represent District #5 to the best of my ability in 2022.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

For as long as I have been on the County Board, my top priority has been - and will continue to be - ensuring that the voices of UWL students and younger La Crosse residents are taken into account in all policy areas. In line with that, I have focused my work on encouraging the county to reserve funds for projects that will benefit young people, like enhanced skilled trades training and sustainable energy production.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

Our 2022 budget has done an excellent job of maintaining quality services while keeping La Crosse County's property tax rate one of the lowest in all of Wisconsin! Even so, I think future budgets could be improved by making greater investments in initiatives that benefit our community's most vulnerable members. For instance, I would like to see our next budget include provisions that increase financial and social support for the homeless.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

I am confident that with innovative and effective leadership, La Crosse County can be one of the best places in Wisconsin to live, learn, work, and relax! With my local government experience and intelligent policy priorities, I will help ensure that our region's unique natural landscape, strong universities, and abundant economic opportunities can exist at their fullest potential in the coming years.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I would just like to thank you for taking the time to get informed about who and what will be on your ballot this April 5th! Nonpartisan spring elections generally don't attract a lot of attention, so it can be hard to figure out which candidates you want to support. With that said, I commend you for being an informed voter. Remember to make a plan to head to the polls, and please remind your friends about the election!

**Name: Sharon Hampson**

Council District: 7 (County Board, not Council)

Current Employment: retired. Previously, worked 25 years in public schools, as a teacher and a counselor

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: [shampson51@gmail.com](mailto:shampson51@gmail.com)

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I want to influence how money is spent to benefit the community the most. I have knowledge and experience and good, strong values.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

Working with middle school children prepares you for anything! I also served on the board for 18 years, 2002-2020.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Spending money conservatively by investing in proven programs and best practices. Public health is a major concern for me.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

Keeping taxes low while still protecting worthwhile, evidence based practices.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

Carbon neutrality is a goal that can be reached. I would like to see the county step forward and be a model to businesses and organizations in the community. We need to continually work on clean air and water. Finally, there are vulnerable groups of people that need to be protected: children, the elderly, the handicapped, and the homeless.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I will stand up for what I believe is right even when it is not easy. I can handle the peer pressure and I can stay strong in the face of opposition.

**Name: Ellie McLoone**

Council District: District 7

Current Employment: sales, realtor

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: [facebook.com/friendsofelliemc](https://facebook.com/friendsofelliemc)

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

Dedicate my time to the city I was born and raised in to address community concerns of safety, spending and homelessness.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

25+ years in marketing, advertising and sales has prepared me to communicate and interact with a wide range of people to hear their concerns and develop a solution. As a small business owner for 8+ years I bring operational experience as well as the importance of buying locally and supporting small business owners.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Community safety and addressing homelessness

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

Utilizing the ARPA funds within appropriate areas that assist the county over a broad range of services.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

A continued effort to promote tourism and the La Crosse County experience for all seasons. Provide a safe community for county residents as well as families visiting our beautiful coulee region.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

As a native of La Crosse I welcome the opportunity to use my skillset to serve and give back to the county.



**Name: Gary W Padesky**

Council District: District #7

Current Employment: Retired from City of LaCrosse

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: 608-317-3331 or  
608-782-1498

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I want to keep the movement going on better collaboration between the city and county. i think myself and other members on the County (and our new Mayor) have made great strides. In the long run this will save all of us money and i think a more efficient way of providing services to the taxpayers.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I have always worked in some type of customer service related jobs, i understand the importance of helping, communicating and working with people on different problems.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Homelessness, (Bridge Housing for Families) Childcare and Skilled Trades Training.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

Actually i'm good with our system, the County Administrator, Executive Board and Department Heads and the different committees all do a great job of bringing the process to the full board.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

I think we can do a better job of helping expand our LaCrosse MTU to branch out and get more cars off the road, i would like to see the county involved on a possible new museum, we still have Floodplain issues, PFAS issues to name a few.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I really want to serve one more term to continue to help people achieve a better way of life, which includes a nice place to live, opportunities in career training, taking care of our aging population (that would be me) LaCrosse County is a beautiful, giving community, i love feeling that i'm helping with that. Thank you for considering me to serve you two more years.

**Name: Chris Woodard**

Council District: 9

Current Employment: ITRS Customer Support Analyst at Kwik Trip

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: Facebook -  
@chriswoodard4laxctyboardd9

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I'm running to help better the communities we call home. I want communities where adults and children feel safe, equal and welcome.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I'm currently a La Crosse City Council for District 9, I hope to use that knowledge to help the City and County collaborate more effectively.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Supporting community safety and working to solve root causes of homelessness

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

Easing taxes through fiscal responsibility

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

A place where everyone is welcome and feels safe. I intend to work with both County government and agencies to make the proper legislative changes to attain these goals.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I'm a proven leader dedicated to our neighborhoods and community.

**Name: Dawn Wacek**

Council District: County Board 9

Current Employment:: City of La Crosse-Deputy Library Director

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: dawnwacek@gmail.com or <https://www.facebook.com/dawnwacekdistrict9>

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I believe local government has the best ability to serve their community and create change. I'm excited about upcoming projects with ARPA funding to address housing, childcare, and infrastructure, as well as the equity work I can do as a member of the Judicial and Law committee.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I've worked in public service for 20 years, with a focus on youth and families. Developing policies, considering equity, and improving access to services have all been top priorities for me professionally and those have dovetailed well with my work on County Board. Looking ahead and thinking about how the pandemic has affected our community, I feel prepared to continue developing plans to improve childcare, affordable housing and services to unsheltered folks, as well as considering county infrastructure--especially for aging populations.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

My top priority would be allocation of ARPA funding to best serve the entire community, but especially those most affected by the pandemic.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

I'm very proud of the fact that we have continued to keep taxes low while building services, prioritizing equity and environmental issues. I'd love to see us continue that work, ensuring that we make collaborative efforts toward sheltering our unhoused populations and finding ways to help families. I also believe we need to support our county workers and offer them competitive wages and benefits so that we can continue to grow and develop.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

I would love to see our county lead the way on green energy initiatives in the state as well as in finding creative ways to address some of our most pressing issues--housing, childcare, services to seniors, and clean water. I'm also very interested in judicial equity and look forward to the work of the Police Advisory group being formed and I believe

my role on Judiciary and Law committee will allow me to advocate specifically for racial and gender equity.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

With the global pandemic limiting access and in person meetings so much my first year, I think the learning curve has been sharp for new County Board Supervisors. I believe I am hitting my stride and have begun to better understand my role this past year which will allow me to really grow in my leadership in the next two year term.

**Name: Monica Kruse**

Council District: District 15

Current Employment: University Supervisor

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: krumoni23@yahoo.com

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I have been a County Board supervisor and leader since 2009. I am passionate about making a difference in our community and keeping it strong and vibrant for succeeding generations. There is much work to be done and we need bold leadership.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I was an educator and teacher union leader for 25 years. I have always been a public servant and advocate for progressive government. I have made it my life's goal to stay well-informed and use effective governance principles I see implemented elsewhere to make our own community stronger, more equitable and more sustainable.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

My guiding philosophy and priority as a County Board leader has been and will continue to be to implement policies that strengthen our county for the future. For example, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to use the millions in ARPA funding to finance transformational projects that will create greater equity, better housing, a more secure employment and economic development climate, sustainable environmental initiatives that will protect us against the devastating effects of severe weather events, and re-imagining how to best care for our children and our aging population that will greatly improve our quality of life for decades to come. We need to seize that opportunity.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

La Crosse County has one of the strongest fiscal management teams in the state. Our taxes are the 5th lowest out of 72 counties in the state, saving our residents thousands of dollars in taxes. We consistently receive a Aa1 Moody's bond rating for sound financial profile. All spending has to be County Board approved assuring rigorous review at several levels. I will continue to advocate for this process.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

My vision for La Crosse County is for us to be the healthiest, most equitable, most sustainable county in the state and the country. As county board supervisors, we must constantly seize opportunities to advance that mission, through securing adequate

funding, employing visionary employees, listening to all the leaders in our community and always being open to learning about new, better ways to do things.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

As a County Board leader, I am always aware that I have a limited time to make a positive difference. I want to make my time count! I want La Crosse County to be the gold standard for how a County should be run.

**Name: Heidi Worminghaus**

Council District District #15

Current Employment: Homeschool Educator

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: hworminghaus@yahoo.com

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I have a unique background in various fields and it often helps me see a bigger picture. As a parent I want to preserve our natural environment and our federal constitutional republic for future generations to enjoy. Unfortunately, too often the policies representatives pursue are not dictated by public opinion, which causes mistrust in our government. We need election with true representation to rebuild trust in our government, especially locally to trickle up.

I've heard from from some in my district that they feel their voice is not heard, this is concerning and this is why I'm choosing to run. Everyone's voice and input is valuable. People deserve a choice and that's why I'm running to make sure their voices are heard and represented.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I come from working class and I've also been in academia, because I have interests in many fields, I can often see a bigger picture and how things tie together. Mostly it's about listening to the people I would represent and being their voice. Once one discovers how much dark money manipulates almost everything, it's hard not to see it anymore. My experiences in life taught me it's wise to be cautious and skeptical and to question everything, and that most humans have good intentions. I've been aware of dark money through environmental activism since the early 90s. I've since seen observed how it has only increased its stranglehold and power in almost every aspect one could imagine. I'm concerned dark money has even trickled down to affecting local level politics.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

People I spoke with most often noted mental health as the issue most concerning to them. The pandemic has taken a huge toll on human health and well-being, and has been devastating to many small businesses. We are seeing a significant increase in suicide, anxiety, depression and addiction, especially the younger population. I've met numerous elders who've shared how lonely these past few years have been. Imagine losing a loved one during this time while feeling "shut in", how devastating.

I think we are just beginning to acknowledge the repercussions from the pandemic, like more violence and school closures due to threats, from the increased pandemic stress.

We must support our law enforcement and the mental health workers they team up with. If we look at the larger cities the "defund the police" has not led to the desired outcomes, in fact it's looked to have backfired. We need good police officers and good mental health workers, it's not an either/or, it's a both/and.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

Most people in my district are unaware of the debt we have incurred and that we pay about 6-7 million per year just on debt services. This is hard earned money that is being "thrown away"; I don't think most tax payers are happy about this. I know other counties that are comparable in size to ours with little or no debt. I think how much good that money could do if we could spend it right here in our county each year.

I think that programs we do tax payers money on should be held accountable, and demonstrate measurable success. If money solved all our problems, we would have solved most of them by now, oftentimes increased spending does not provide the hoped for outcomes. There are some really successful non-profits such as Safe Families for Children, we need stronger relationships and ties to community, something money can't necessarily buy, but it can support successful programs.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

My vision is that more individuals become interested in local politics and become involved at the local level. It's easy to be disgusted by politics, and we need more involvement not less, that's precisely how we got into this mess in the first place. I'm excited to see so many candidates running, this is a great thing! Too often these positions are unopposed, and while I greatly appreciate anyone who serves in this capacity, I also think people need a choice, and we all need to be paying more attention to what's happening locally.

I am working towards this goal by meeting with the people in my district and sharing information and resources. I'm trying to restore hope and faith in local politics, and remind voters that their input really does matter and it can have a significant impact.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

Unfortunately, mega corporations seem to be accountable only to their share holders and not "We the People". We live in a corporatocracy, and it will take a massive unified grassroots effort to reclaim our birthrights. They want us divided, and we simply can not fall for it. Division hurts our community. We need to work together with respect.



People are under huge amounts of stress, and inflation continues to compound it all. Stress leads to more domestic abuse, addiction, poorer health, etc. We need to put more emphasis on strengthening our local economy and on things that build healthy relationships, unity and togetherness.

Stress may be funneled into fear and hatred which may lead to "othering" groups of people. If one looks at history, this has always led to terrible outcomes. Let's hope that's not the case. Let diversity be our strength and not our downfall. Moment by moment, we have a choice in how we respond to one another. Our children are watching us.

**Name: Mike Giese**

Council District: Supervisory D 17

Current Employment: Retired

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: Call 608 317-6607 or e-mail mikegiese@charter.net

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

La Crosse County governance, be it:

roads/transportation or

law enforcement/courts or

public health/covid19/ground water/sanitation or

community well-fair/elderly/homelessness/family - human services or

economic development/land use/zoning/UW Extension/vital records or

Veterans service and so much more, is vital to the quality of life of all people living or working in La Crosse County. The county administrates federal, state and local funds and provides for most of our governmental services. I wish to use my background in service at the state, county and municipal level to help bring about collaboration between the cities, villages, towns and the county to provide cost effective services.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I ask that the voters of District 17 apprise my more than 25 years of service in municipal and county government as demonstrating that I am uniquely qualified to serve as their representative on the county board.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

The office of County Board Supervisor is non partizan. For the last 15 years, for the most part, the board has functioned in a congeal way with dialog leading to compromise and consensus. Factionalism at the state and national level has resulted in partisan extremism and dysfunctional governance. A policy that rejects factionalism and provides for conciseness to meet the needs off all in a efficacious and cost effective way is my top policy priority.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

First, let me state that La Crosse is one of the best fiscally managed of the 72 Wisconsin counties. Every new budget is an opportunity to be more fiscally conservative by considering the long term returnee on investment (ROI) and avoiding picking "winners and losers" through grants to private corporations. As a specific example, three years ago the county turned to borrowing funds to pay for county highway maintenance. Borrowing funds to pay for ongoing maintenance is not fiscally sound. Moreover by

borrowing the cost of repairs are increased by interest costs and city tax payers pay most of the cost for roads that they use little.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

I have a vision that local governments work together to take advantage of our economic opportunities and solve our problems. The City of La Crosse is the commercial center of a regional economy composed of the towns, villages and cities in southwestern Wisconsin and southeastern Minnesota. Our regional economy prospers because of the economic synergy of farming, healthcare, educational institutions, transportation, retail (big & small) and tourism. All our cities, villages and townships are critically needed to work together to advance the La Crosse Metropolitan Service Area (MSO).

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

It is my privilege to serve if elected by the voters of the 17 District. It is my obligation to respect the traditions of "small d" democratic governance in support the nonpartisan office of La Crosse County Board of Supervisors.

**Name: Rick Cornforth**

Council District: La Crosse County Board/ District 19 representing the City of Onalaska and Town of Onalaska

Current Employment: Sobi Biologics/rare disease treatments and Current member of the La Crosse County Board

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: rwcorn4th@gmail.com

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I am a lifelong resident of La Crosse County. My family goes back many generations and I'm proud of my family's legacy. Serving on the La Crosse County Board is just one way I can give back to the community I'm so proud to call home. I look forward to the opportunity to serve my constituents again on the La Crosse County Board in District 19. Local government has the greatest impact on residents' quality of life, and I will continue to advocate for everyone's best interests in a thoughtful, smart and open minded manner. My number one commitment is to get busy addressing local needs that keep La Crosse County a desirable place to live and work.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

My grandfather (originally a farmer) and father were both developers in La Crosse County and surrounding areas. Growing up in this work environment was very beneficial to my understanding of land development, conservation and the importance of farming for all. This background has helped me in my role on the Planning, Resource and Development Committee. As a past Chair on this committee and a member since joining the board in 2016, I have the knowledge and experience to evaluate each proposal effectively and work with my colleagues to determine the best options to move forward.

I work in healthcare today. This experience has been helpful to understanding the importance of social programs and the impact the County Health Dept has on our residents. Currently I would work with high-risk infants born preterm or with heart and lung complications. I've witnessed first hand how drugs and alcohol abuse can contribute to some of these situations. I understand the importance foster care programs (my parents did foster care for 15 years) and other programs that contribute to healthy outcomes.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Two policies I will continue to focus on if re-elected is Sustainability efforts to improve our air and water quality and equality/equity for all from an internal and external standpoint for the county. There is much more to accomplish for both of these initiatives. I'm definitely up for the challenge. I have partnered with other local leaders

and organizations within the county to evaluate these tasks and how they can be accomplished in the most efficient manner.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

County road conditions and infrastructure still remains a very common concern among many county residents. It is important for everyone to understand that not all roads in the county are under county jurisdiction for maintenance and repair. However, even after a more aggressive plan was passed to repair and rebuild roads at an accelerated rate, I think communication and education on these projects is important for all residents to understand. I would also like to see more collaboration between county resources/programs and other municipalities and school districts within. This could lead to more efficient and effective programs and services made available to all.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

The county is still drafting the final document of the updated comprehensive plan. There are many important initiatives within this document that will need further support and attention to accomplish this vision. As past chair of the Sustainable La Crosse Commission, I worked with many community leaders to create and pass a resolution "Ready for 100" presented to the County Board declaring the county's plan to reduce carbon emissions and accomplish carbon neutrality by 2050 if not sooner. I also wrote a resolution with a nearly unanimous vote in favor of declaring racism a public health crisis in our county. I'm proud of the work I have accomplished and look forward to participating more in the development and growth of La Crosse County both economically and socially.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

County Board seats, historically, have been non/partisan, I'd prefer to keep that legacy going and I would like to maintain an independent stance.

**Name: Vicki Burke**

Council District: La Crosse County Board District 21

Current Employment:: Retired Teacher

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: vickiburke4471@gmail.com

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I currently serve on the La Crosse County Board and wish to continue because I have done a good job. La Crosse County is in the best financial condition of the last 15 years. County taxes have gone down while continuing Important services. We are successfully handling a pandemic.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I was a public school teacher, teaching 32 years at Logan High School. I am organized and do my homework before voting on an issue.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

My top priority has been, is now and always will be families and children.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

I see no need for changes with the exception of providing adequate child care.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

My vision is a secure, safe place for citizens to live, work and recreate. My work has been largely in criminal justice. I will continue to make decisions which are evidence based. I will support the use of ARPA funds to make a long-term impact on the people in La Crosse County.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I seek the support of voters in District 21. I am doing as much contact with them as I can and I am working everyday to win their vote.

**Name: Rob Abraham**

Council District: County Supervisor 21

Current Employment: Retired - Law Enforcement

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: @VoteRobAbraham - Facebook

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

Public service is a calling. I have served and protected this community for more than 30 years as a law enforcement professional. Now retired, I have time to focus my service to be a voice for the people. I don't care for politicians, I believe in term limits and I believe it is time for new faces and prospectives on the La Crosse County Board. Voters deserve a choice and District 21 hasn't had a choice in a long time.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I have vast experience in government after serving our community for more than 30 years, including years as an administrator in policing/city government. I have successfully managed a multi-million dollar police budget. I have worked directly with many facets of county and city government and I have seen first hand how transparency with taxpayers hasn't always been a priority. I have experience crafting ordinances and resolutions, securing grant funding and the management of personnel issues. I am a Certified Public Manager with a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and I am a graduate of the FBI National Academy. I served on many ad-hoc boards, including appointment by the Mayor to the City of La Crosse budget reduction committee during the COVID-19 pandemic. I was elected to the La Crosse School Board in 2021. I have lived in La Crosse County my entire life.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Transparency, frugality with tax dollars and improving community safety.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

It's time to review the upper administrative costs/salaries and how La Crosse County compares to other similar sized counties. I would also like to see a focus on infrastructure improvement projects with grant funds/relief funds over prioritizing social programming that will eventually cost taxpayers more money long-term.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

La Crosse County is a great place. That's why we choose to live here. My vision is a safe and vibrant county that prioritizes the needs, concerns and desires of the taxpayer-not

the politician. This means we work toward lower taxes, low county government intrusion into daily lives, improving infrastructure such as roads, protecting Lake Onalaska as a county attraction and resource and supporting local businesses that are vital to our county. Too much time, effort and resources is expended on the desires of criminals, non-taxpayers and social or personal agendas versus the needs and desires of the taxpayers and businesses.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I have crossed voting lines in the past and I encourage you to also. We need to focus less on political parties and more about the right person who will listen and get results for our County.



**Name: Pam Viner**

Council District 22:

Current Employment: Retired

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: pamviner22@gmail.com

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I want to continue to be an advocate for and to represent the people of Holmen as their County Board Supervisor so that their voices and interests are heard.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I have worked in both Tribal government and in State government. That experience has shown me how to best work with other elected officials, employees, and the public to best serve the people of Holmen all the people of La Crosse County.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

To ensure that all population areas of the County are treated and represented equally. That includes access to programs, committee representation, and funding.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

I would like to see us allocate funds to help a wider representation of the county. I would also like to see us stop borrowing money for projects that should be a standard part of the budget like roads.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

My vision for the County is growth to meet the needs of all its citizens. The County has tremendous potential but will struggle until all areas of the County are heard. We need to share that with all government officials and work to get everyone on board.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I would like you to know that I am a hard worker and that I don't give up. I believe that everyone deserves the right to be treated equally and fairly and I will fight for that.

**Name: Kristie Tweed**

Council District 24

Current Employment: Marketing & Business Consultant

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

[www.facebook.com/Tweedforcountyboard](http://www.facebook.com/Tweedforcountyboard)

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I first and foremost want to give back to my community. I've lived in my district for almost 20 years and in the county for 26 years. I'm proud to have raised my family here. I want to make sure our local government stays focused and doesn't get overtaken by extreme politics.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

My professional life has taken me down various paths over the last 34 years. I've also had unique life experiences that qualify me as well.

I have a paralegal degree and completed my internship at the La Crosse County DA's office working mainly with the victim witness coordinator. At times I was asked to do legal research for the staff attorneys. I also served on a domestic violence task force for the county. I was a volunteer for New Horizons and an advocate for domestic violence victims. During this time in my life, I spent a lot of time with attorneys and in court rooms observing the judicial process.

My first job out of college was as a contracts coordinator for a healthcare purchasing organization owned by 10 local hospitals including the two major healthcare systems in La Crosse. I negotiated contracts for pretty much anything a healthcare facility would order. I eventually moved to sales and spent a lot of time in hospitals, clinics and long term care facilities working with department heads helping them utilize lower cost contracts. This gave me a good understanding of healthcare in our county and throughout Wisconsin.

I changed careers at one point so I wouldn't have to travel and be away from my son. I have spent the last 25 years in marketing and business consulting helping many local businesses grow. I help them accomplish their goals while being financially responsible.

My wide range of knowledge and experience will help me make informed decisions on the La Crosse County Board. My personal experiences as a once struggling single mother, advocate for victims and community volunteer will allow me to bring a fresh perspective to the board.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

There are many areas I am interested in working on. I think finding a long term solution to the homeless problem, addressing racism in our community, expanding broadband to rural areas and the appropriate spending of ARPA funds are extremely important in the next two years.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

Taxes have decreased in the county the last several years. With the ARPA funds, the board has an amazing opportunity to address the issues I discussed above without raising taxes. I want to make sure the board continues with their promise to use the ARPA funds to create long term solutions for La Crosse County.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

My vision is to see La Crosse County continue to be an amazing place for people to raise families. We should strive for a more equitable, inclusive community. I want to make sure the board continues to run as a non-partisan entity working towards that vision and doesn't get taken over by extreme politicians. I will represent my district with common sense and civility.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

Because of my background, I'm most interested in sitting on the Health & Human Services and/or the Judiciary and Law committees. I strongly support a police advisory committee and hope that it can lead to productive ideas on how to improve policing in La Crosse county.

**Name: Troy Gunderson**

Council District: 26

Current Employment: Retired School Superintendent

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

It is time to give something back - service.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

My 35 years in public education including 16 years as a high school principal and 12 years as a school superintendent have provided me with the opportunity to work with school boards and several county agencies. I have a great deal of experience working with public budgets, property tax rates, and strategic planning. I serve as an adjunct professor of School Finance in the Superintendent Licensure Program at Viterbo.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

Environmental protection, infrastructure improvement, and municipal cooperation.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

My goal is to ensure we fund our priorities through strategic budgeting. We must establish agreed upon goals and proactively align our funding with our goals.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

My vision for La Crosse County is a wonderful place to live, work, learn, and visit. This requires county leaders to focus on protecting the environment, maintaining the infrastructure, supporting our employers, and collaborating in service to our citizens.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

It is simply time for me to give back. I worry about the state of our government at every level and wish to do my small part to ensure the next generation has a better and brighter tomorrow.

**Name: Karen Keil**

Council District La Crosse County Board Supervisor Dist. 28

Current Employment: Teacher -- Onalaska Middle School

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

karenkeilarellano@gmail.com

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I am running because I believe in giving back to my community. If re-elected to the county board I want to continue the progress made over the past 3 years. I truly believe the greatest impact in politics is made at the local level.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

As a public school teacher for the past 23 years, I am familiar with leadership roles, the importance of educating voters on the issues and managing time and money. I grew up in a household with parents who were politically active. I know how important local government is and the great impact it has on La Crosse County residents.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

The board is tasked with deciding how to best spend the 23 million dollars of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) money. Making sure that the funds reach a maximum number of people and are aimed at helping the community recover and recoup from the Covid pandemic is a crucial step in moving forward.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

I am proud of how our county board works in tandem with the department heads to make sure the money allocated is spent wisely and for necessary costs. We have one of the most fiscally sound budgets in the state of Wisconsin. This directly impacts residents in the form of lower tax bills. I want to maintain the good work that has been done by the board and continue to seek input from county employees, who have the most knowledge about how budgetary funds are used.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

I want La Crosse County to be a great place for families and residents. Environmental issues such as clean water, sustainable land use and viable infrastructure are at the forefront of my "to do" list. We need to spend resources for preventive measures that protect water sources and keep our roads in good, drivable shape. As a member of the Planning, Resources and Development committee, I am able to speak out and vote with the best interest of the community in mind.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I have a deep passion for servant leadership. I believe that healthy and happy residents make La Crosse County an attractive location for businesses, tourists and families. As a life-long resident, I am proud of my home and want to make it the best place possible to live.

**Name: Dillon Mader**

Council District: County Board District 30

Current Employment: Instructor at Western Technical College

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: [dillonmader@gmail.com](mailto:dillonmader@gmail.com)

**Why do you want to run for County Board?**

I am running for County Board for several reasons. First, I seek to advance sustainability measures with more urgency in light of increasingly common severe weather, especially flooding. Second, I hope to help level the playing field in education, employment, housing, and other sectors. Countless policies and practices have created opportunity, wealth, and income gaps between privileged communities and marginalized, oppressed communities. Those policies and practices can and should be changed. Third, politics has drifted further and further from dialogue, and I hope to restore the role of listening—communicating across difference—to make informed, compassionate decisions.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the County Board?**

I have deep ties to this County and community. I was born and raised here. As the son and grandson of teachers, farmers, and a small business owner, I see this place through different lenses, giving me a fuller understanding of its values, strengths, and areas of growth. I believe I can make informed, ethical decisions about the things that matter to us. Just as important, I am a teacher, prepared to listen, learn, and lead. For the past several years, I've had the opportunity to serve a wide array of students, including those incarcerated, those in re-entry, those from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, those from poverty, those from other countries, and more. I owe these individuals and others working with them—thousands of conversations—for showing me what works and what doesn't in our County and beyond.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the County Board?**

If elected, I will seek out, propose, and vote for sustainable housing solutions in our community. Too many of our community-members cannot access affordable, safe, viable housing, which in turn disrupts access to mental health services, employment, education, and more. Housing intersects in deep and complex ways with countless community-level and even global challenges, so I think it deserves more time and attention.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the county budget and how funds are allocated?**

I think our county budget allocates mostly appropriate amounts across the different expense categories. That said, I believe local government should serve as our

community's safety net and, in some cases, its leader. I would like to see the Board provide additional funding for Health and Human Services given long wait-lists and -times for mental health and other services. I believe this investment will reduce other costs borne by our community like that of incarceration. I also favor expansion of both public works and buildings for additional sustainability projects and, in turn, energy independence, energy savings, and reduced emissions.

**What is your vision for the County of La Crosse and how would your work as a Board Supervisor move the county towards that vision?**

In my view, La Crosse County nearly has it all: jobs that pay living wages, three higher-education institutions, access to the outdoors, and what feels like a perfect blend of city and country. It's why I choose to live here. That said, La Crosse is not immune to the challenges that face our State, region, and Country. We have unequal access to economic and educational opportunities. We are contributing to climate change. We engage in unsustainable farming and business practices. We are growing more partisan, more distrustful, less willing to engage in the conversations and learning we need most. I hope to be part of the solution for these ills and others so that La Crosse can continue to grow—become a better place to live for everyone here. My vision, which is really a shared one, includes infrastructure improvements (especially eco-friendly ones like solar investments and walking and biking paths), more affordable housing (especially income-based and transitional units), increased access to mental health services, programs that level the socio-economic playing field, and transparency in decision-making.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I am not a candidate who will make gut-level decisions and fire from the hip in the face of complex challenges. I believe in taking the time to listen, research, and learn to make informed, careful, compassionate decisions. I also take the role of representative seriously, which means I will be responsive to the people in the District and County I represent.



# Holmen School Board

Candidates:

Josh Neumann - No Response  
Rebecca Rieber - No Response  
Barbara Wuensch  
Chad Updike - No Response

**Name: Barb Wuensch**

School District: Holmen School District

Current Employment: Probation and Parole Agent-Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:  
[facebook.com/barbwuenschforschoolboard](https://facebook.com/barbwuenschforschoolboard)

**Why do you want to run for your district's School Board?**

My run is personal. As a HHS graduate myself, I could go on and on about my experiences in the classrooms in the district and the teachers who helped make me the person I am today.

I knew when I had my boys, I wanted them to attend school in Holmen. I will be forever grateful for the education they received. Their teachers were caring and supportive when they needed to be, but also pushed them towards meeting goals when they didn't think they were capable of reaching them. One of my children was diagnosed with a learning disability while still in elementary school. He was never told what he wouldn't be able to accomplish. He was supported by all staff in his learning, and as he got older, was more confident in his classes. It came as no surprise the result of this support was son's decision to major in Special Education in college. His skills and confidence continue to develop. That is why I am running. I want every student to feel they are important and worthy. I want them to accomplish goals they may have been told elsewhere they weren't capable of reaching. I want them to succeed in whatever they choose and know that the Holmen School District was a part of those achievements.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the School Board?**

I have been a Probation and Parole Agent with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections for 24 years. In this position, I am responsible for analyzing situations and making critical decisions on a daily basis. These decisions effect the safety of the community and those around me. Collaboration with law enforcement, community stakeholders and the judicial system are critical to my position as a Probation and

Parole Agent. I take pride in my relationships with area law enforcement agencies and the County Judicial System and contracted treatment providers in the area. My professionalism and experience speaking publicly will also be an asset to the Holmen Board of Education. It is important to present myself in a professional manner and listen concerns broad by the community.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the School Board?**

I will advocate for a safe and inclusive learning environment of all students in the district.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the school district's budget and how funds are allocated?**

The board has recently announced funds are going to be used for the creation of new positions at every building in the district to address the mental and emotional health of our students. These mental health were amplified by the pandemic, during the time students were not afforded in-person learning. I believe the district has done an exceptional job at addressing these issues but also think more could be done to address other mental health needs in our district.

I also believe more work needs to be done to support staff recruitment and retention in the district.

**What is your vision for your district and how would your work as a School Board member move the district towards that vision?**

I am advocating for a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students, regardless of race, gender and socioeconomic status

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

Thank you for your consideration!

# La Crosse School Board

Candidates:

Katie Berkedal

Dawn Comeau

Merideth Garcia

Juan F. Jimenez (i)

Kimberly Krejchik - No Response

Mary LaMothe - No Response

Kent Stein - No Response

Jake Williams - No Response

**Name: Katie Berkedal**

School District: La Crosse

Current Employment: Program director at La Crosse Community Foundation

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: [Lacrosseschoolboard.com](http://Lacrosseschoolboard.com)

**Why do you want to run for your district's School Board?**

I'm running for school board because I care deeply about equity in education and helping students navigate through the many challenges facing this, and future, generations. Coming from a family of educators, I'm aware of the concerns shared by many teachers and school staff and am eager to listen and help craft sustainable solutions.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the School Board?**

I'm a mom of two Longfellow students, an alumna of the district, and my husband is a teacher. My role at the community foundation involves running the local grant program for nonprofits, and I sit on the leadership team of several local coalitions working to address homelessness, substance use, and youth mental health. I see the school board as a way to expand the community work I'm already doing. Several local leaders, including teachers, have asked me to run. I'm a problem-solver, a natural leader, an open listener, and am skilled in navigating difficult conversations.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the School Board?**

My top priority will be looking at all decisions through an equity lens.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the school district's budget and how funds are allocated?**

I would like to see the state fulfill their promise of funding 2/3 of all school budgets. Their failure to do so for decades has strained local districts for far too long.

**What is your vision for your district and how would your work as a School Board member move the district towards that vision?**

My vision for the district is a place where all students and staff have the tools they need for success. I plan to listen to their voices, and leverage relationships with other community partners to help advance equity in schools.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I'm deeply troubled the current far-right interference with schools. Much is on the line here and our district deserves thoughtful leadership untainted by ulterior motives.

**Name: Merideth Garcia**

School District: La Crosse

Current Employment: Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

Www.lacrosseschoolboard.com

**Why do you want to run for your district's School Board?**

I prepare young people to become teachers in our community, and I care deeply about the experience of students, staff, and teachers. Serving on the La Crosse School Board would be my way of advocating for meaningful learning environments supported by the necessary resources.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the School Board?**

I specialize in trauma-informed pedagogy, which I implemented as a public high school English teacher in Austin, Texas, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Given the scale of the pandemic, my early training has become more relevant than I ever imagined possible. More recently, my work has turned to the research and practice of sustainable teaching, which is built on the belief that students receive the best education from instructors who are supported enough to thrive in their personal and professional lives.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the School Board?**

My priority is to defend teaching practices that promote a comprehensive understanding of American culture and equitable outcomes for students.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the school district's budget and how funds are allocated?**

I'd love to see the state fully fund their promised portion of the school district's budget, and funding should give priority to resources that improve the learning environment for students and the working conditions for teachers.

**What is your vision for your district and how would your work as a School Board member move the district towards that vision?**

I want a school district that takes a comprehensive approach to supporting students socially, emotionally, and academically through their K12 experience.

As a School Board member, I'll advocate for policies that proactively build support systems for teachers and students.

**Name: Juan F. Jimenez**

School District: La Crosse

Current Employment: Associate Dean of General Studies

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

jfjlaacrosseschools@gmail.com; www.lacrosseschoolboard.com

**Why do you want to run for your district's School Board?**

Strong communities begin with strong public schools. I ran, and continue to run, for this office because I believe in the power of education to break barriers—academic as well as financial—so that students and families can achieve whatever goals they have. My father worked in the construction trades; my mother was a laundry aide at the hospital where I was born. Because of their sacrifice and dedication, and with teachers and educational employees who believed in me, I have been able to accomplish what my parents believed was not possible for them. That is what I will continue to fight for every day.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the School Board?**

I am the product of public education, born to Mexican immigrants, and a first-generation college student. I have been involved in education for over 20 years and have taught in both a rural public and affluent private school, served as a director of two urban teachers' unions, a higher education administrator, director of a learning center, and school board member. I have also served on many local, state, and national boards, including the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation, the accreditation body for P-12 teacher education preparation programs across the United States of America. I have also been recognized as a 2018 La Crosse Tribune Rising Star Under 40. I also believe I am a calming force who can listen to different perspectives with empathy.

I believe my actions on the board these past three years have proven where I stand regarding supporting our workforce and community; working with the administration to listen to our students and employees as situations have arisen; and navigating the challenges of educating children during a pandemic. The issues that come before the school board are complex, and those who believe they have simple solutions have only focused on one part of the solution, forgetting how their solution will impact other parts of the school district and community.

Also, in my role as Board President this past year, I have had to navigate very complex personalities and points of view while ensuring every Board member is provided an opportunity to speak. The Board President controls the agenda; however, I also believe the presidency means I must put my own opinions aside. I must ensure any issue that is timely and germane to the work of the Board of Education, whether I personally agree or not, comes before us. I must also try to find common ground with those who I

personally disagree with because our students, employees, and community deserve to have a Board of Education that is a cohesive unit and models civil discourse. Above all, the Board President must be a model for all Board members and be the spokesperson and advocate for public education in La Crosse. I believe I have lived up to these expectations, and I look forward to continuing to do so for another term.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the School Board?**

The purpose of public education is to provide a high quality education to support the growth of our students to achieve whatever academic or career goal they set for themselves. The only way this can happen is by ensuring we are focusing our resources within the classroom. I believe the school board has been trying to do that while maintaining fiscal stability for our school district by working on a long-range facility plan and finding any efficiencies possible in other areas. The school district, like much of the country, is seeing declining enrollment for the foreseeable future. Our student population is much smaller than it was even two decades ago. However, our facility footprint has not changed in that time. We need to rethink our facilities to right-size our district, and we are gathering input from all community stakeholders to ensure we make the best decisions. My doctoral work was in designing and developing effective learning center spaces in higher education, and part of that research involved looking into effective P-12 learning spaces. Thus, I know how serious it is to ensure our financial investment in our facilities are not squandered so we can continue to invest the bulk of our resources inside the classroom.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the school district's budget and how funds are allocated?**

I believe the better question is what changes should be made in how schools are funded at the state and national level. The state must invest and live up to its promise of fully funding its share of public education and eliminate the funding of voucher schools which are a major drain on public school budgets. The federal government must fully fund its share of special education as well. Unless and until these promises are kept, it is an impossible task to ensure the appropriate amount of funds are being provided where they are needed at the local level. Educational employee wages in Wisconsin are ranked in the bottom third of the country, districts are required to find funding to support all special needs students who live within the district boundaries whether they attend public or private schools, more teacher assistants are needed within the classroom, mental health supports are lacking, and the list goes on. To pull funding from one area of the budget unravels major issues in another area. Plus, with the changes made with Act 10, declining enrollment, facility maintenance issues, and declining funding, there is little to no chance of ever seeing these needed investments happen. La Crosse has had a recurring operating referendum, which is a wonderful boon because it shows how much our community values our public schools. Yet, it is not enough.

**What is your vision for your district and how would your work as a School Board member move the district towards that vision?**

A board member is a steward of public resources to ensure our public schools serve the greater good of society. My vision aligns with the district's Mega Result (R-1): Students will discover & develop their talents and abilities and will be prepared to pursue their dreams and aspirations while contributing effectively to their local, state, national, and global communities. I believe I have been working toward this vision for the school district by asking thoughtful questions of the administration; holding the administration accountable to the results expected by the school board; and attending linkages with staff, students, and community members to hear concerns and ensure we address what we can at the board level.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I have given my entire career to education because it is one way for families to break out of the poverty cycle and build a better life for future generations. I have seen it first hand as a child of immigrants. My grandmother had a second grade education; my parents had a high school and trade school education. They now have five children who all have earned higher education degrees, two of which have earned doctorates. Education is the only thing that no one can take away from you. It has the power to change lives and communities. I think people who run for school board should have a commitment to see education in this way because it is the only way to maintain the promise public schools are meant to keep to our society.



# Onalaska Common Council

Candidates:

District 1:

Jim Olson - No Response

Leanne Stokes

District 2:

Bob Muth - No Response

Diane Wulf

District 3:

Larry Jiracek

**Name: Leanne Stokes**

District: 1

Current Employment: Retired

Best website or contact for information on your campaign: Stokes for Council. Facebook

**Why do you want to run for Onalaska Common Council?**

I want to represent the constituents of District 1, to make sure their voices are heard by Common Council.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the Onalaska Common Council?**

I have lived in Onalaska since 1972 and have been an active member in the community. I have been involved in many community outreach events , fundraisers for Police Canine Unit, benefactor for food banks, fire department, Church groups.and many more.

What would be your top policy priority if elected to the Onalaska Common Council?

Onalaska has a committee structure which alderpersons become members. My top policy is to work side by side with community members to make sure their recommendations are brought back to the Onalaska Common Council.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the Onalaska's budget and in how funds are allocated?**

I am approaching this work wanting to represent District 1 constituents. I will be reaching out to them on a regular basis to find out where they stand on the budgetary items.

**What is your vision for Onalaska and how would your work as a Common Council member move the city towards that vision?**

My vision is to help give District 1 Onalaska constituents opportunities become active in their community and make sure their voices are heard by the Common Council.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I am approaching this work as my public service to my community.

**Name: Diane Wulf**

District: 2nd District

Current Employment: City of Onalaska, 2nd District Alderperson

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

wulfcommoncouncil@gmail.com

**Why do you want to run for Onalaska Common Council?**

As the current 2nd District Alderperson and ten-year Onalaska Common Council veteran, I am very proud of my accomplishments. I enjoy working with constituents, answering their questions and helping them resolve issues. I have a long, successful history of working in municipal government and would like to continue in that role.

**How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the Onalaska Common Council?**

As someone who has served the Onalaska community for 21 continuous years by serving on a committee, commission, board, or Common Council, I have the institutional knowledge and a keen memory as it relates to municipal business. I also think it is imperative to elect qualified women. I have served on and chaired most every committee in Onalaska municipal government. Because I have a high level of dedication, I attend committee meetings even if I am not a member in order to be well-prepared. My attendance at Onalaska City Hall meetings is exceptional.

**What would be your top policy priority if elected to the Onalaska Common Council?**

The City of Onalaska is in a very good position as our priorities have been and continue to be supporting healthy growth and economic development, along with maintaining our infrastructure. I work well with the mayor, city administrator, and department heads to accomplish the goals of the Council and the wishes of constituents.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the Onalaska's budget and in how funds are allocated?**

As chair of Finance & Personnel and former chair of Board of Public Works, I would continue to emphasize the need to continue to support our infrastructure. With the Wisconsin Legislature's continuing budgetary restraints being placed on municipalities, managing city finances are a serious challenge. I will continue to find a way for Onalaska to stand out and provide excellent services for residents.

**What is your vision for Onalaska and how would your work as a Common Council member move the city towards that vision?**

My vision for the City of Onalaska is to have our municipal government be responsive and work for its citizens. I've always said Onalaska is a great place for people to live,

work, play, and retire. As a 30-year homeowner and engaged citizen, I want people to love Onalaska as much as I do.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

I have been a county party member for almost three decades. My seat for the Onalaska Common Council is for a non-partisan position. Regardless of my partisan membership, I strongly believe in serving in a non-partisan way.

There are many issues I have championed while serving 10 years on Council. A few of them are:

- Hiring of additional public safety workers
- Continued dedication to support of infrastructure
- Employee wage studies to ensure employees are fairly compensated
- Vocal proponent for increased wages for seasonal and part-time employees
- Continued need for new and replacement sidewalks that connect us to one another
- Reasonable admission fee for the municipal pool
- Increased pay for poll workers
- Smoke-free Onalaska

As a nearly 30-year county party member, I am currently the county party secretary and have previously served as treasurer. I am grateful for the opportunity to have served Onalaska for the past three decades in many volunteer positions:

- Onalaska Common Council member (10 years)
- Onalaska Council President (2 years)
- La Crosse County Democratic Party Secretary (2 years)
- La Crosse County Democratic Party Treasurer (3 years)
- Da Capo Band member (15 years) and board member (approximately 3 years)
- La Crescent-Hokah Community Band member (approximately 12 years)
- Hilltopper Marching Band Parent board member (2 years)
- Irving Pertzsch Building Committee member (1 year)
- Onalaska Swimming Pool Advisory Committee member (3 years)
- Founder and volunteer of the Onalaska Schools' Food Pantry (2002-2007)
- Plan Commissioner (1 year)
- Irving Pertzsch classroom volunteer (2 years)
- Irving Pertzsch PTA co-treasurer, treasurer, vice president, and president (4 years)
- Fauver Hill PTO Treasurer (1 year)
- Welcome Wagon Club President (approximately 3 years)

# Onalaska School Board

**Name: Erik Archer**

School District: Onalaska

Current Employment: US Army

Best website or contact for information on your campaign:

voteforerikarcher@gmail.com

## **Why do you want to run for your district's School Board?**

I am an active-duty Army officer and moved here from Virginia where I served in the National Military Command Center in the bowels of the Pentagon. I arrived and was floored by this driftless region's beauty, sense of community and educational excellence. All three of my children are in the Onalaska School District and in every engagement with their teachers and administrators, I sense passion, drive, and an authentic altruism in wanting the best for my children. We decided to turn down future Army assignments and retire here in Onalaska due to the exceptional nature of this community. I want to run for the School Board because I find purpose in service, because I want to give back to the school system that has given my family so much, and because I want to do what I can to help facilitate the continued excellence in education that our community is known for.

## **How has your work and life experience prepared you for a seat on the School Board?**

I am an experienced and proven planner - adept at seeing the big picture and developing and executing plans to help navigate an organization towards that end state. I have extensive service as both a leader and teammate on diverse and talented teams. There is a stereotype that the military is rigid and hierarchical, and at times, we are. But the last seven years of my career have been spent on agile teams with flat communications. I have extensive experience with budgetary processes, especially as they enable desired strategic plans. In my current role as the leader of UW-L's Military Science Department (also encompassing Winona State University and Viterbo), I direct educational plans and processes to achieve specified outcomes and also teach the seniors. Essentially, I understand how organizations navigate waters to achieve excellence, I see my role in that mission, and understand how a team works collaboratively to cross the finish line.

## **What would be your top policy priority if elected to the School Board?**

Our community is known for its educational excellence - something achieved by our teachers and through our students and administrators. Culture is also at the heart of this achievement. I am immensely proud of our teachers and am thankful for their dedication and commitment. This is something we cannot take for granted. My top

priority would be ensuring that we are positioned to retain talent and maintain our excellence years from now. COVID has taken a toll on our school district team and the burdens our teachers, faculty and administrators have undertaken to keep forward momentum are not indefinitely sustainable. We need to develop a plan to transition from COVID to sustainable operations and to maintain our talented teachers so we don't suffer from an attrition that could damage our achievements and outcomes.

**What changes, if any, would you like to see in the school district's budget and how funds are allocated?**

It is too early for me to comment on this other than to say I want to ensure our teachers receive a salary commensurate with their excellent performance and sufficient to retain talent. They are our educational foundation.

**What is your vision for your district and how would your work as a School Board member move the district towards that vision?**

The team is strong and our educational outcomes are something we can all be proud of. But COVID has taken a toll and we need to recognize that the load teachers are bearing is not sustainable. We are now in the phase of the operation where we need to develop a strategic plan to first sustain this effort, and then when the conditions are right, return to normal levels of workload. Key to this is recruiting new teachers and maintaining those performing well. The Chief of Staff of the Army tells us that "People are our #1 priority" and this sentiment fits well within our School District. The time is ripe to tangibly and significantly demonstrate to our educators that we value their efforts thus far and know that to, "do more with less" is a misnomer and that we only ever do less with less. Strategic thought and effort needs to be placed towards maintain and building our excellence. I believe we are at an inflection point. I believe the consensus is largely already built and the initial effort needs to be highlighting the issue versus convincing.

**What else would you like La Crosse County Democratic Party members to know about your candidacy?**

Excellence in educational outcomes should be an apolitical pursuit - something in which we all find common ground. I am troubled by the recent politicization of school boards and would steadfastly resist those efforts in our community - as a resident or school board member. It is a dangerous twist on the Wisconsin Idea. Groups seek to influence the education presented in order to influence the students later in life outside the classroom. This is a threat to those that prioritize education before politics. I am a history major and teach US military history at the university 400 level. In that class, I tell my students, "If you read American History and at points do not feel ashamed or horror, you are not reading all of our history". And I say that as a man who swore his life to our constitution. So I do not seek to diminish our nation in the eyes of our students. Rather, we should seek to tell the whole story, from as many perspectives as possible, so

that our students have a rich and complete understanding of our achievements and failures. I understand the immense responsibility inherent in education - setting the scaffolding for our students. Perhaps the mistake is in not allowing them to explore a diverse and varied range of perspectives and instead in curating for them a path we feel "best" prepares them for the life ahead. I believe in our students and our obligation to challenge them with different perspectives, our own failures, and cultivate in them a questioning mind. Because in that, the best of us emerges.