

Respondent

< 25 Anonymous >

42:53  
Time to complete

1. Please enter your full name and municipality.

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Paul Wray Hemsing. Medicine Hat

2. What active role have you played to improve our community prior to running for council/mayor?

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I have created multiple fundraisers that have been successful and also attend and support many fundraisers such as Meals for Moms, the Medicine Hat Food bank, The woman's shelter, The Champion Center.

3. What initiatives would you propose to improve tourism, investment attraction and development to our municipality and region and support business recovery during/after the pandemic? \*

The development of the waterfront project is something that will draw increased tourism. We have an amazing city with multiple recreation options for all age groups. I believe that in order to attract more business and support existing businesses we must close the gap between commercial and residential taxes and utilities. It is difficult to keep a business prosperous and I find it very wrong that business pays much more for taxes and utilities. In order to keep businesses prosperous we need more people with better paying jobs.

4. In Medicine Hat, businesses pay a higher proportion of property taxes compared to the residential sector. Medicine Hat's tax gap of 2.35% is one of the highest in Alberta. What is your position on the current approach to taxation and your thoughts on potential strategies to narrow this gap?

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I already spoke of this above. There is no reason for higher rates of tax and utilities for business. It is quite unfair. This needs to change.

5. If elected, what specific steps would you take to encourage & promote entrepreneurship within the region?

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People need to want to live here. Recreation, parks, and events are all important drawing cards. The saying if you build it, they will come, is very valid. Attractive tax and utility rates would also be something to attract entrepreneurship. Rather than give millions of dollars to help big business like Aurora ( which has miserably failed) , can you imagine if we invested that 6 million into small business to help them through this covid financial crisis! Multiple people could have improved and expanded their business with that.

6. What is your stance on COVID-19 related laws that mandate requirements, including masks and vaccine passports?

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I almost lost my life to covid this year and spent 39 days on life support and 21/2 months in hospital. Plus recovery. I had one immunization but it was too late for me. My covid experience was frightening. For this reason and also because it makes common sense we need to mandate actions that will minimize the sickness and death rate. I support vaccination passports and masking bylaws.

7. What is your plan for publicly-funded services (examples would include Medicine Hat Public Library, power plant, facilities) if elected?

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I consider these as assets of the city that need to be assessed individually to see if they are profitable or not. Do they improve the quality of life or are they not utilized enough.

8. How important is it for our region to have a local Community College? What specific steps could the municipality do to work better with Medicine Hat College to provide ongoing opportunities for future learners?

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We need the Medicine Hat college and it's programs because our adult children have the opportunity to study locally. That creates a higher chance that they will set down roots in Medicine Hat. How can we work better with the college? By investing in growth and expansion.

9. How will you attract newcomers to the district and address the needs for a skilled workforce? \*

If our city is desirable then the workforce will want to be here. Keeping focussed on maintaining and improving our quality of life and competitive costs .

10. What is your stance on the importance of mental health & wellness support in our region? What ideas, implementations, and initiatives would you put forward to improve the overall mental health & wellbeing of our community?

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We have a mental health crisis. If people need help in the form of counselling they can wait many weeks. I have suggested in my platform that there be a mobile safe injection site that also offers mental health support and support to allow vulnerable people to transition into treatment .

11. How will you further diversity and inclusion initiatives in our region, as it relates to each of the pillars in the Chamber's Vote Prosperity Platform: <https://www.medicinehatchchamber.com/voteprosperity2021/> (<https://www.medicinehatchchamber.com/voteprosperity2021/>)

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I believe that having an annual multicultural exposition and fair would bring out the diversity of people. To befriend people from all different cultures is not easy to do when they feel that they must segregate. The more we include and learn from underrepresented parts of society the more vibrant and strong our community will become.

12. On a municipal level, how do you intend to address climate change and pollution?

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Because of increasing carbon tax from the federal level people are feeling overwhelmed by the constantly rising costs of energy. We are already doing our part and our country is carbon negative. Global climate change can not be addressed effectively until all countries join together. On a municipal level do we really have the ability beyond recycling and being responsible? And those are already in place.

13. What strategies will you use to communicate and engage with the community and remain accountable to the citizens?

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Residents ( tax payers) want to be informed about city decisions. It is not enough to just have newspaper articles and filmed meetings. So much is in camera and the public has no idea what is happening or why decisions are made. We need to include the public and be transparent with them. They deserve it.

14. Are there any other issues you wish to address or highlight that were not mentioned in the questions above?

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A mobile safe injection site that also provides light first aid and supports for mental health and addiction is very needed. Any family can be affected by addiction and these vulnerable people deserve to be supported through what must be such a challenging journey.