



Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

Questions Submitted By

The Springfield Lake Shore Improvement Association

Responses provide by Misty Buscher

1. Lake Springfield Priority. What is your top priority for Lake Springfield?

Dredging of the lake is a priority for me. We need to take care of Lake Springfield, we have ignored this need for way too long

2. Future of CWLP. Given changes in state and federal energy and environmental laws and the economy, what is your expectation for the future of CWLP? If you anticipate closure of CWLP in the foreseeable future, what do you propose for the city to do regarding:
 - a. the power plant, and its equipment?
 - b. those currently employed by CWLP?
 - c. any effect on the care and maintenance of Lake Springfield?

My expectation for CWLP is to encourage our State Lawmakers to slow down on the closure of coal fired power plants. This is being pushed in order to embrace green energy, but the infrastructure is not in place for green energy to replace current energy generation. I would use the city lobbyist as well as myself as Mayor to talk to State Lawmakers (repeatedly). This is a global issue, other countries are dealing with similar issues, energy shortages when a high reliance on green power is not sustainable. Once we are forced to stop generating energy with a coal fired power plant, I would like to have an option to convert our power plant to another source of energy generation. I believe it is in the best interest of Springfield to continue generating power. This would continue to employ our CWLP employees as well as continue activity at Lake Springfield.

3. Beach House Development. What is your vision for the future of the Beach House at Lake Springfield? Who would be in charge of the care of this property if it is developed? Is there any thought of reopening this area to the public for swimming, a restaurant, or any other usage? Please explain actions you will take to address the future of the Beach House.

I would like to see the Beach House property used very similar to a place I visit in Tomball Texas while visiting friends. There is a food truck park there which offers a building with indoor restrooms, a counter where drinks can be purchased and some porch seating. This is what I would like to use the beach house for. Then around the Center Park area next to the beach house you can have food trucks with picnic tables around the grassy area. When I was a teen Center Park was a place to play frisbee, badminton, volleyball and hang out. I think we can better utilize this space for our citizens' enjoyment. This would also bring additional attendance to Henson Robinson Zoo. I would contract out the management of this facility.

4. Other Commercial Development. What are your thoughts on additional commercial development on Lake Springfield -- do you favor or oppose additional restaurants or other services for general public usage? What are your thoughts about a potential casino at Lake Springfield? How should the type and location of any additional commercial development be managed to preserve the character of the Lake?

I do not support putting commercial development on Lake Springfield. I appreciate the Marina and am glad we have a facility like the Marina where our residents can rent a boat and enjoy the lake. This allows citizens who do not live on the lake the ability to enjoy the lake. I do not support a casino at Lake Springfield. My parents live on Brunk Drive, I grew up appreciating and enjoying the lake area. I love our lake and think a casino would be detrimental to our lake.

5. Lake Dredging. A significant dredging program for Lake Springfield would be beneficial for the health and maintenance of the Lake and for the quality of city water. Would you support a dredging program for Lake Springfield? If so, how do you anticipate a dredging project would be funded?

I fully support dredging Lake Springfield. I believe we should budget areas of the lake to be dredged yearly. We have ignored this need for far too long in my personal opinion.

6. Circulators. A recent proposal to install circulators in Lake Springfield was met with a great deal of opposition. Will you commit to oppose any further consideration of the circulators and similar equipment installations?

I do not support the placement of circulators in Lake Springfield.

7. Lake II. What is your outlook and timeline for Lake II? What are the next steps for this project? If the Army Corp and other necessary approvals are not forthcoming, will the proposal be terminated? When will this be determined? What will be the consequences if the choice is made to end this project? What will be done with the property purchased by the city for Lake II?

I believe we are at the mercy of the Army Corps of Engineers to determine if they feel Lake II is warranted, with the current application this Mayor has requested. I think while we are waiting to hear from the Corps (on the current application) we should be actively improving Lake Springfield (dredging). I believe if Lake II is not approved by the Corps we should look at our options for the ground at that time. These options could be for hunting and recreational purposes, for a solar farm or sell the property and then use the funds for our current Lake. The land is a valuable asset and we should not ignore this asset.

8. Deer Population Control. The current pilot deer hunting program at Lake Springfield has both opponents and proponents, and its effectiveness is not clear. What will you do to address the deer population around the lake?

I do believe in a deer hunting program at Lake Springfield. I believe allowing deer hunting assists in keeping the deer population under control for safe travel. We should evaluate the population of deer annually to evaluate if the hunting program is warranted. Wildlife populations can ebb and flow and we need to be cognizant of this.

9. Building and Zoning Variances. (a) Do you support an Ordinance that would grandfather any dock longer than 35 feet if it has existed for 5 years or more? The existing variance process that must be completed for a sale of property with a longer dock is time consuming and interferes with pending sales. (b) How can the city more effectively manage variances, allowing reasonable exceptions while avoiding negative effects on neighboring property?

I do support any ordinance that would grandfather in docks longer than 35 feet. I believe the city makes many issues difficult for our citizens

unnecessarily.

10. Lake Road Multi-use Safety. (a) Will you initiate action on a long-discussed project to improve West Lake Shore Drive to make it safer for joggers, cyclists, and walkers? Sharp curves and minimal shoulders make this road particularly dangerous. (b) Bike paths on both East and West Lake Shore Drive and connections to the UIS and LLCC campuses would improve health and safety for recreational use of lake roads. Will you support adding bike paths around Lake Springfield? When can progress be expected?

I believe the city should be a more bike friendly place in general. I would support a study on how to effectively make the lake roads more bike/walking/jogger friendly while maintaining the integrity of our lake homeowners property. I have a vision of a more bike/walking/jogging friendly community and would take action immediately on initiating this vision.

11. Sewer Upgrades. Will you support continued work to complete Lake Springfield area sewer upgrades in a timely manner? Do you see this work as a priority?

I would support the continuance of sewer upgrades, not just at the lake but around the entire city. This is another issue we have ignored for far too long. When the city received its very first distribution of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) dollars in 2020, I emailed the Mayor, the Budget Director and the Director of Public Works to recommend the bulk of this money be used to correct our sewer issues. This money was not expected, sewers are not glamorous but they are a necessity. This seemed to be a good use for an influx of unexpected dollars, in my opinion. To have flooding, storm sewer back up and septic tanks that could possibly leak into groundwater is unacceptable for a community like Springfield.

12. City-wide Priorities. What are your top priorities for the city of Springfield? What is your plan to attract business and industry in order to add jobs and people to the city?

My top priorities for the city are infrastructure, homelessness, economic development and beautification of the city. In order to attract business and industry to our city we need to do a better job of taking care of our city. Some of my priorities are needed in order to impress new businesses or industries looking at Springfield vs. our competitors (Champaign, Bloomington, Peoria). This is where a public private partnership for beautification of our city will be beneficial. I will then work with our current business community to see who

they do business with and then go and talk to those businesses to ask if they would consider coming to Springfield. If they say no, then I will listen to what we need to improve to attract new businesses. A strong Mayor will ask the hard questions, listen to the answers and then take action to address concerns. Some of the businesses I would recommend we contact their ancillary services are LRS, MMC, Springfield Clinic, Brandt and BUNN. The city also needs to work with the Airport Authority, Sangamon County and the SMEAA Board in order to show a unified front for interested businesses. I promise to be an ally to these other government entities in order to move Springfield forward. We definitely need to add more jobs to our community and not just focus on food service. This seems to be the focus lately and this is not the economic impact our job market needs. We need to attract higher paying jobs than just those of the food service industry. I have a strong will to improve economic development. I am married to a Realtor who is a small business owner and I understand the need for growth in our community to continue prospering.