

League of Women Voters of Wyoming July 2018
Laramie City Council

Laramie's nine City Council members receive a stipend of \$120 for each day of meetings they attend; no benefits are provided. The office is non-partisan, the top two (four in the case of Ward 3) in each race will go on to the General Election ballot. There are three wards, each with three councilors. They serve four-year terms without term limits; expiration years are staggered. This year there are two vacancies in Ward 1. One is for a two-year term to serve out the remainder of an unexpired term; the other is for a four-year term. Ward 2 has one vacancy (4-year term) and Ward 3 has two vacancies (both 4-year terms). Those elected will join those whose terms do not expire: Charles McKinney (Ward 1), Jayne Pearce and Dave Paulekas (Ward 2) and Pat Gabriel (Ward 3). Candidates are listed below grouped by ward. No other candidate filed for Ward 2.

What experience, qualifications and interests do you have that would encourage voters to select you for this office?

Victor Bershinsky (Ward 1, 2-year term): As a lifelong West Laramie resident, a graduate of Linford Elementary, Laramie Junior High, Laramie High, and the University of Wyoming, and a 24 year employee of the University of Wyoming, I feel uniquely qualified to serve on the governing board of our city. As an engineer and a problem solver, I am interested in helping Laramie develop a long-term plan for infrastructure upkeep and improvement. Laramie has been a great place to grow up and raise my family, but I feel like we need to look at ways to improve our existing quality of life, and promote growth.

Casey Frome (Ward 1, 2-year): I hold a J.D. Law degree, as well as Masters of Public Administration and Business Administration degrees from UW. I have lived in Laramie for 12 years and care about the city in which my kids are being raised. I have run a variety of businesses for the last 10 years in and out of Laramie, as well as a law practice. I've built and revitalized homes for myself, beautifying Laramie's neighborhoods. I want to find efficient, effective, and common sense ways to approach and accomplish the city's goals. I enjoy all types of outdoor recreation and work.

Brian Harrington (Ward 1, 2-year): I grew up in northern Wyoming in a place without much opportunity. My parents worked hard to support us, but they couldn't ever seem to get ahead. Seven years ago, I decided to chase my dream to become a small business owner. I started with a loan that my parents took against the equity on their home. I knew I only had one shot. As I built my business, it became clear how special the Laramie community is. I'm running to preserve and enhance what makes our town unique and to ensure that support and opportunities are plentiful for all.

Tim Nichols (Ward 1, 2-year): I could elaborate on my years of leadership experience, or my ability to understand and navigate complex budgets, or even my proven record of making sound decisions that make good things happen for other people. But really, what I think qualifies me for this position is the fact that I care. I care about my community and I am passionate to see it thrive. To me, that is all the qualifications that make a person the right candidate for this position.

Jason Shute (Ward 1, 4-year term): My qualifications are; a resident of Laramie, diverse background with extensive experience in construction and maintenance. I am interested in

maintaining and growing Laramie's countless opportunities for entertainment (indoors and out), business development and a great education system from kindergarten through higher education at the UW.

Jessica Stalder (Ward 1, 4-year): I am a Laramie Native. My grandparents and parents were raised here, and I am raising my son here. This is my home and I want to see it, and its citizens, thrive. As a nurse, I care for all people equally and with compassion. I will bring integrity and advocacy to City Council. As a successful business woman, I feel confident in my ability to think critically about issues such as budget and growth. I am not a career politician, looking to advance my career, but a citizen servant—committed to serving this community.

Andi Summerville (Ward I, 4-year): I currently serve as Mayor and have been a member of the Laramie City Council since 2014. My passion is to see this community succeed, grow and be the best place to live in Wyoming. During my first term, I have worked with the Wyoming State Legislature and our federal delegation for Laramie, worked with community groups such as Laramie Main Street and others to make Laramie the premier place to start a new business, helped to enhance Laramie's quality of life, worked tirelessly to improve Laramie's street and drainage infrastructure and above all—I am always willing to listen.

Paul Weaver (Ward 2): I served on the city council previously between 2013-2017 and the Laramie Planning and Zoning Commission prior to that from 2011-2012. I think those previous experiences will be helpful. Laramie has a lot of activity as a community in general and events can evolve pretty quickly, having some familiarity with our municipal government should be beneficial. I am interested in working on many issues the city is examining such as our business environment, economic development, coordinating with the university and cooperating with the county on water protection and future growth for Laramie. There are many other important issues as well.

Jason Jensen (Ward 3): I have run three small businesses, and managed a large regional company. My emphasis is to help Laramie grow responsibly so students have an opportunity to stay in Laramie after college. I continually run into people regionally that wished that they could live in Laramie but there are not enough jobs to support them. My children will need jobs in the near future.

Chris Maki (Ward 3): First and foremost, I am a mother. I care about families, a family friendly Laramie, a community for all abilities, and ageing in place. I have had the joys of working for small businesses and for the University of Wyoming. My background is in sustainable design, managing large projects, and problem solving. I am interested in a sustainable and successful future in Laramie, with thought behind every decision.

Karl McCracken (Ward 3): Moved to Laramie from Cheyenne in late 1970's to manage a local business office. Past President, Laramie Chamber of Commerce. Past President, Wyoming Territorial Prison and Old West Park. Past board member on three Wyoming newspapers. Community involvement in several charities and community organizations. Over 20 years with Foster's, Inc. when Foster's had 225+ employees. Experience with lenders, bonding and bonds (government, non-profits, contractors). Four years, nine months prior experience on the City Council. Ability to listen to others and hear good ideas, or have a discussion with competing viewpoints while adjusting the situation to get things done. Readily Accessible.

Erin O’Doherty (Ward 3): I’m deeply rooted in Laramie. I came here in 1991 to work as a wildlife ecologist and built a home with my husband James Johnson. I am passionate about making Laramie a welcoming and healthy place for all our residents and visitors. As a scientist, I examine problems carefully and look for creative solutions. I am awed by the physical beauty of this area, and I treasure our wildlife and our open spaces. I’ll strive to protect our drinking water and promote our local businesses. I’ll work for fairness and transparency in decision-making.

Bryan Shuster (Ward 3): I am finishing up my third term on council and I am hoping for a fourth. I take seriously attendance at council meetings. I have sat on several boards including Planning board and appeals, Airport board, Jubilees days, Railroad Depot, and Rifle Range board. I have lived in Laramie most of my life, I am married and raised three children in Laramie. I reside in ward three and have lived there since the late 1980’s. I support Laramie by shopping locally and encourage residents to do the same when possible.

What do you see as the top three strengths of the city and how do you suggest using these strengths to benefit the city?

Victor Bershinsky (Ward 1, 2-year): Three inherent strengths that Laramie possesses are the quality of life, the young, energetic population, and access to incredible outdoor recreational opportunities. The city can leverage these strengths to attract new businesses, encourage our university graduates to remain here either as entrepreneurs or valuable additions to growing, local businesses, and attract a wide range of visitors enthusiastic about sampling all of the recreational activities our city has to offer. With the rapid growth being experienced along the front-range, I think it is just a matter of time before Laramie begins to see this growth as well.

Casey Frome (Ward 1, 2-year): The proximity to lots of outdoor recreation, UW, and a young, energetic workforce. These complementary strengths, if marketed cohesively, could entice people and businesses to move to Laramie. Furthermore, the city and UW could focus more on entrepreneurship to attract new businesses together. Notwithstanding the potential challenges, contracting with UW to perform studies and research projects currently done by out of state, expensive consultants would be advantageous for both parties. This would give real world experience and a connection to the city for the students and faculty, and substantially lower fees for the city.

Brian Harrington (Ward 1, 2-year): The strengths of Laramie are the central themes of my campaign—economy, community, and opportunity. I’m dedicated to investing in these holistically. As we grow economically, we should enhance and preserve what makes Laramie special and expand opportunities that benefit all. Economy: continue economic diversification; fight for fair wages; invest in creative enterprises; support and attract local businesses. Community: preserve unique community character; expand opportunities for outdoor recreation; maintain high quality of life; protect aquifer to ensure clean drinking water. Opportunity: a safe, welcoming, and diverse community; affordable housing development; safe and well-maintained streets; access to affordable healthcare and quality education.

Tim Nichols (Ward 1, 2-year): Laramie has many strengths that can be identified, but I see the top three as our community, economic opportunity, and its geographical location. Fundamentally, our community which is unique here in Laramie, provides our citizens a small town feel with large opportunities. This environment has created a tight knit culture that makes Laramie the Gem that it is. Also, our economic opportunities are vast and have the capability of bringing a greater quality of life to our citizens with further development. Lastly, our

geographical location has the potential to capitalize on multiple markets such as recreation, tourism, and industry.

Jason Shute (Ward 1, 4-year): Our system of government allows citizens to become involved in policies, directions for growth and quality of life. Bringing issues to the public for discussion allows for and encourages diverse thinking. Quality of growth is monitored through licenses, permits, public hearings. There is extensive deliberation regarding “new” businesses.

Jessica Stalder (Ward 1, 4-year): Laramie is an increasingly vibrant community; promoting tourism through UW events and recreational opportunities such as the Pilot Hill Project will increase revenue for the city. The University brings a diverse and talented population to Laramie. Increasing opportunities for entrepreneurship and improving quality of life as well as providing incentives for affordable housing will encourage talented young people to make Laramie home.

Andi Summerville (Ward 1, 4-year): Laramie is consistently ahead of the curve in innovation and envied statewide. We need to continue investment in new ideas that leverage innovation for community benefit. Second, we are amazing grant writers—usually number one in the state. We should continue to invest in this revenue source and use it to leverage additional dollars for infrastructure needs and quality of life projects. Finally, we are financially scrappy. With the lowest per capita tax collection in the state, we need to look at different revenue sources that are not state dependent so that we can improve our financial outlook and stability.

Paul Weaver (Ward 2): First, Laramie has a unique position as community that combines the commitment of long-term residents with the natural ebb and flow of a university population. This creates many opportunities that other Wyoming cities may not have. Second, as is often observed Laramie hosts or is close to many recreational assets, UW athletic events, hunting, fishing, an exceptional dining and nightlife culture with many live music events, all of which attract customers. Finally, Laramie is the right size to be a convenient and pleasant place to live. Leveraging these assets to generate revenue should be a top goal for the city.

Jason Jensen (Ward 3): Laramie is a top choice for companies in the Rocky Mountain region because of the location, residents active mind set and educated population. I would like Laramie to take advantage of the natural resources to benefit the residents and bring in companies that benefit the majority of the community.

Chris Maki (Ward 3): The Laramie community is supportive and encouraging of small businesses. This is the key to economic growth and diversity. The city relies on good staff to deliver great service. In times of budget shortfalls, it is extremely important to preserve, maintain, and recognize the employees who keep the city running. Laramie volunteers are truly the heart of the community. They give back in ways that can’t always be measured, and supply a community need. Volunteers and organizations are the glue that holds communities together. Supporting these three is the key to continuing growth in Laramie that is organic and sustainable.

Karl McCracken (Ward 3): The university, location, and educated populous are among the three top strengths. The University providing a large educated population base, in an area located on I-80 near the Snowy Range with highway travel and fish license numbers that are significant is great. Adjustments to maximize return to the city can be made. The 2% sales tax is largest single source of funds for city government, additional retail businesses are needed so people will not be driving to Cheyenne and Fort Collins to spend local tax money. We need to focus on costs of business startup. Out of space. 760-3116.

Erin O’Doherty (Ward 3): Our resourceful community is our greatest strength. Generally, we look out for each other. We need to extend that kindness to everyone, so that our most vulnerable people do not feel endangered. Another strength is our proximity to the mountains that provide clean water, clean air, and recreational opportunities. By protecting and promoting open spaces, we improve our quality of life and encourage visitors who contribute economically. We have strength in our vibrant downtown. It is full of locally-owned businesses that create community and provide jobs. We need to help increase awareness of this treasure among visitors and residents.

Bryan Shuster (Ward 3): Laramie’s top strength is our people. The organizations we have are strengths and no two are exactly alike. Each one has their own purpose and set of values. The diversity of each group/organization is what makes them important and one of our strengths. People are attracted here for our outdoor activities, mountains, trails, schools, summers, access to UW and it’s events but most importantly, its people.

How would you make Laramie safer for bicycle and pedestrian travel?

Victor Bershinsky (Ward 1, 2-year): Laramie is a great town for bikers and pedestrians, for about 6 months a year. During the other 6 months, bikers and pedestrians are at the mercy of a haphazard city snow removal scheme, and sidewalk shoveling requirements that are unenforced or unenforceable. Plowing only the major thoroughfares forces bikers either to share these roads with heavy traffic, or take their chances on the unplowed, rutted, icy side streets. Pedestrians face a patchwork of shoveled and un-shoveled sections, along with icy gutters and side streets. Solutions to these problems involve more investment both from the city and individuals.

Casey Frome (Ward 1, 2-year): While traveling, I noticed parking lanes a bike lane width away from the sidewalk. This innovative design puts the bike lane against the side walk and protects the cyclists with a line of parked cars. Education, road markings, and signage would be essential for implementation and changing years of tradition. For pedestrians, a uniform system of crossing lights would assist drivers and pedestrians in knowing when it is safe to cross. Common sense says pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers should pay attention, put down their phones, and the streets would be much safer. More enforcement of existing laws is another option.

Brian Harrington (Ward 1, 2-year): Many of our residents enjoy walking and biking, or don’t have access to a car, so the safety of cyclists and pedestrians is integral to our community. Investing in multi-modal transportation also makes sense economically—you reduce parking pressure, wear-and-tear on streets, and traffic—while adding a community amenity that brings value to our quality of life. With a limited budget, the most cost-effective way to do this is to integrate pedestrian and bike improvement into the city’s long-term major streets plan. I admire how the City has worked with the community to integrate such improvements to the upcoming 3rd Street renovation.

Tim Nichols (Ward 1, 2-year): To make Laramie a safer place for bicyclists and pedestrians we can start by making sure we properly maintain our existing crosswalks and bicycle lanes. The question then becomes how do we pay for these expanding maintenance needs with a limited budget and limited street maintenance staff? The answer to that is not easy, but we must focus our attention on generating additional revenue. After achieving the financial requirements to sustain existing elements, we can consider adding additional bicycle lanes and enhanced crosswalks. Our citizens, including bicyclists and pedestrians, deserve to feel safe regardless of their preferred method of transportation.

Jason Shute (Ward 1, 4-year): Improve conditions. Safer walking; traffic education; strict enforcement of regulations protecting walkers and bikers; design areas sensitive to the needs of pedestrians; well lit sidewalks; clearly marked cross walks; special lighting; pedestrian activity Ted cross walks. Safer Biking: recognize biking as more than recreation; better marked and more bike turn lanes; traffic control giving bikes the right of way; advance green lights for bikes; traffic education.

Jessica Stalder (Ward 1, 4-year): Designated routes for bicycling must be developed parallel to Grand avenue and near other main thoroughfares. Cyclists on these streets without bikes lanes are in danger, and also disrupt the flow of traffic.

Andi Summerville (Ward I, 4-year): Several things need more attention. We need to modernize our transportation network to be pedestrian and bicycle friendly, including a comprehensive bicycle lane system, updating crosswalks and intersections for pedestrian safety and addressing intersections that have any history of issues quickly. I also recommend a city-wide education program to orient new residents to the multi modal streets and bicyclists to the rules of the road. For winter pedestrians and bicyclists, we need to identify revenue sources that can allow us to plow more streets and clear sidewalks in areas that are routinely used such as downtown and the tree area.

Paul Weaver (Ward 2): Laramie has and will continue to emphasize pedestrian and bicycle safety through its local boards and commissions, specifically the Traffic Commission, the Parks and Recreation Board and the Downtown Development Authority. These boards and commissions are built from citizen membership who take public input and work with professional staff to make recommendations to the City Council. If there are emerging needs in the area of bicycle and pedestrian safety this existing structure is in place to find whatever solutions we may need. The city takes the recommendation of these citizen committees very seriously often adopting their recommendations into city ordinance.

Jason Jensen (Ward 3): Laramie bikers are of all ages and biking needs to be safe for children, professionals and retired citizens. I believe the current laws are adequate but an awareness campaign needs to be launched so people are aware of the serious accidents and consequences of causing harm to bikers. This should be announced on social media, radio and at community events.

Chris Maki (Ward 3): I would work with local cycling communities to understand the nature of the issues surrounding cyclists in Laramie. There are still some parts of Laramie with limited or poorly maintained bike lanes, roads with poor lighting, and issues with access for all abilities and ages of riding. Protected bike lanes would be another step that should be encouraged the next time a street improvement project is brought up, especially for larger traffic patterns or biking corridors.

Karl McCracken (Ward 3): Suggest pamphlet detailing the laws and regulations for bicycles and pedestrians be given out during university registration to all students, faculty and others. Suggest this be provided to the junior and senior high school students also. Have the community service officers working with the local school district teach a class to each school on what the laws and regulations are. Then enforcement would be key. I don't believe I have seen many tickets for traveling against traffic, jay walking, etc. Rules and regulations exist. Educate, enforce, then see what the problems still are and adjust current regulations if necessary.

Erin O'Doherty (Ward 3): I admire our neighbors who bicycle, walk, or run every day, regardless of weather. We should promote this healthy lifestyle and try to make it safer. I'm hesitant to make specific recommendations, because I am opposed to elected officials micromanaging traffic flow (for example, the state legislature recommending the closing of 15th Street). Professional transportation engineers study these issues and use real data to make recommendations. We should ask advice of WYDOT, city employees, and people who walk, run, and bicycle frequently. We could encourage University engineering students to consider the issue in senior design projects.

Bryan Shuster (Ward 3): The Safest thing is to follow the rules, it's a disadvantage to walk an extra 250 foot to cross at an intersection but it's the safest. Look both ways GET OFF YOUR PHONE! LPD has laws regarding licensing of bikes. There are bike lanes on every major street except Grand and third. Anywhere there's not a building preventing it, there should be a shared path at least ten feet in width on both sides of those streets. The safest thing pay attention, stop at stop signs, look both ways at intersections, stop for traffic signals when red.