

Four candidates vie for three City Council seats

Written by Chris Lee

Three seats on Holyoke's City Council will be filled after the upcoming April 6 election. Incumbent J.C. Peckham was appointed June 16, 2009 to fill a vacant seat left by Sara Bohrer and has decided to run for re-election.

Frostteana Elmquist and Steve Moore both filed petitions for candidacy while Brian Akey met the deadline to be considered as a write-in candidate for the upcoming election. Akey's name will not appear on the ballot.

J.C. Peckham

After spending nearly eight months on the City Council, Peckham said he is still learning. "I'm getting my feet wet and realize I can stand up and say what I think and what I feel," he added. "It's been a big learning experience."

Peckham looks forward to continue learning and helping address different issues if elected.

Keeping the city financially viable is another thing Peckham believes in. "I'm always out in the public and always listening to what people have to say," he said. He went on to say he is always open to talk about issues with people.

Growth is important as well. "That's probably the biggest thing," he added. "Keeping us moving in the right direction."

Peckham said feedback has been positive both with regard to him being on the council and what they have accomplished. "People think our council before now got really closed off and they think now it's starting to open up." he said. "That's not a knock against councils in the past, but that's public opinion."

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“I want to make sure in every discussion we have, all sides are represented,” Peckham said. “That they are at least brought up in the conversation, and if they are immediately dismissed, that’s fine.”

Peckham was born in Yuma and moved to Holyoke when he was 5. He has been employed by PC Telcom as the lead cable technician since 2005.

He began at Charter Communications before working for the City of Holyoke. When PC Telcom purchased the cable system he went to work for them.

He received a degree in telecommunications from Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Okla.

He also spent eight years in the Marine Corps. After a six-month tour in Iraq in 2003, he settled down and married his wife, Natalie. He has three children, Bradley Coyne, Alison Coyne and Victoria Erickson.

When Peckham put his name in for consideration to fill the vacant seat last summer, his decision to do so came from a combination of things. He has always had an interest in the government and his mother (Connie) had served on the board in the past.

Frostteana Elmquist

Elmquist has spent her entire life in the area and knows Holyoke well. She grew up near Amherst and attended HHS.

She attributes her decision to run for election to learning. She wants to learn how things are

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done with the council. Of course, that's not the only reason.

"I think this town needs to grow and needs some diversity," Elmquist said. "I want to see some change."

She said she just recently decided to put her name in the mix. She also said some of her co-workers at Ampride pushed her along to make the decision.

If elected, she looks forward to the learning process of being involved with the council and how decisions are made.

Keeping the younger generation in town is something else she is passionate about. The growth she hopes for is something she hopes would help keep that generation around.

She began working at Ampride in 2007 and was a housewife before that. Elmquist has four children, Greg 26, Dale 21, Stephnie 19 and Michaela 16. She also has four grandchildren.

Steve Moore

After spending nearly 20 years in Holyoke, Moore said it's time to get involved.

"I've been thinking about running for awhile," Moore said. "I just thought it was right."

Promoting the businesses and everything Holyoke has to offer is important to Moore.

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“I think the city does a really good job,” Moore said. “There’s some youth on the council now. I think the city as a whole has to look to the youth.”

He said he has seen more youth come back to Holyoke—most of which are agriculture related.

If elected, Moore said he is willing to listen to everyone. “You can’t make everyone happy, but we need to do what’s best for the city. You’ve got to look at the whole big picture of everything and do what’s best for the city.”

He currently sits on the board of directors for Western Potato and said he has an idea of how things are run on a board.

He grew up in Alliance, Neb. and moved to Holyoke in 1991 and began working for Western Potato. He currently serves as branch manager and has held that position for five years.

Moore attended Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis, Neb. Moore and wife, Dusty have three children, Canyon 13, Tobin 10 and Ashton Robles 5.

“I enjoy Holyoke,” Moore said. “It is time to start getting involved more.”

Brian Akey

Akey has lived in Holyoke for five years now and is ready to get more involved.

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He serves as secretary on the golf course board and is ready to do more. "This is another way to get involved in the community," he added.

He attended school at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kan. and ended up living there for 13 years. He and his wife Jeanette moved to Holyoke in 2005 where he began working at MV Equipment.

They moved from Perry, Kan. where he was involved with the 4-H and rodeo boards.

Getting a younger generation involved is important for Akey. He said looking around at different things in town, it seems as though the younger generation just isn't getting involved.

"Everybody talks, and no one wants to do," Akey said. "I'd like to do or actually try. Let's make sure we're spending our dollars the way they need to be spent," he said.

Keeping the golf course, ball park, pool and other attractions in shape so people will come here to use them is something else Akey believes in. Keeping money in town is important to him as well.

He said the support from his wife and friends has been good. "I've been here for five years and plan on staying," he added.