

## **Mayor, three council members to be elected Tuesday, April 3**

Written by Chris Lee

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Residents of City of Holyoke will elect a mayor and three council members to four-year terms Tuesday, April 3 in a municipal election.

Incumbent Orville Tonsing was the sole person to file for the mayor's seat, which he has held since Aug. 17, 2010.

Incumbents David Churchwell, Scott Murray and Kevin Scott all filed for re-election and John Ayoub filed a petition for candidacy to a four-year council term.

The election will be held from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Tuesday, April 3. Holyoke City Clerk/Treasurer Kathy Olofson said since the town is considered one precinct, the only polling place will be at the council chambers at 407 E. Denver St.

Olofson also noted 618 ballots will be mailed out this year. Registered voters who signed up to be a Permanent Mail In Voter (PMIV) with the county also signed up to receive a municipal ballot by mail.

This will be the second municipal election where the clerk will be sending ballots to residents who have requested to be a PMIV. All ballots must be received before the close of polls at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 3.

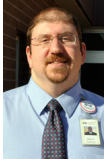
The last day to register to vote in the upcoming municipal election was March 2. Olofson did note there is still time to request an address change.

**John Ayoub**

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Hoping to be able to give back to the place he now calls home, Ayoub said it was time to step up and run for a council position.

Ayoub is currently the Administrator at Melissa Memorial Hospital. He moved to Holyoke March 2007 when he accepted the job on an interim basis. He was named the permanent CEO/administrator after about seven months on the job.

“I really do feel like Holyoke is my home now,” Ayoub said. “I’m looking for a different way to give back.”

Ayoub said he doesn’t feel there is anything wrong with the current council and doesn’t have a burning platform. “I do feel like I have a knack for looking at the big picture and I hope I bring a skill set that could be valued at the city council level.”

Ayoub considers Holyoke his home and would like to continue making it his home. “I’d want to do what I can to improve it. Not that it’s bad,” he noted. He thinks Holyoke is a great place. If it wasn’t, he wouldn’t be here, he said. “But everything has opportunity for improvement,” he added.

Ayoub thinks he would bring a unique skill set and perspective to the table and be a positive force.

Ayoub grew up in Valparaiso, Ind. He received his bachelor’s degree in public health from Indiana University in Bloomington and master’s in health care administration from Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis.

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While pursuing his master's, Ayoub worked in the department of medicine in division of endocrinology and metabolism where he handled grant monies for some very smart people.

Following graduation, he applied for and received a national fellowship which took him to Kearney, Neb. where he worked for Good Samaritan Hospital. He began as an administrator fellow working directly for the CEO.

After one year, Ayoub became the senior planning analyst where he worked on special projects for the CEO. One of his bigger projects was purchasing a day care located next to the hospital and making it part of the hospital itself.

He later served as the vice president for mission integration.

Following his time in Kearney, Ayoub moved to Fort Collins where he became the owner and CEO of his own business, RTF Enterprises, LLC.—titles he still owns today. The business handles small business consulting.

As part of that, he purchased Starlight Theater in Fort Collins, a place he has since sold. Following his time in Fort Collins, Ayoub moved to Holyoke accepting the administrator's job on an interim basis which later became a permanent position.

He is a board member of Colorado Stroke Alliance, board member of Colorado Hospital Association Shared Services, board member of Centennial Mental Health Center, president of Melissa Memorial Hospital Corporation board, board member of Colorado Rural Health Center, member of Data Services of Health Care and on the Phillips County 911 board.

Ayoub is a certified EMT-Basic and a Fellow in the American College of Health Care Executives.

In his free time, he enjoys reading, playing strategy games, spending time with his fiancée Erica

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Brady and visiting Holyoke's local restaurants and Peerless Theatre. He also has a niece in Kearney, Neb. he likes to visit.

### David Churchwell



Churchwell has served on the City Council since Oct. 2010 when he was appointed to fill Orville Tonsing's seat after Tonsing took over as mayor following the resignation of David Nygaard.

Churchwell said he has liked being on the council and wasn't aware of all the issues and decisions that come before it. "I like that interaction with the public and then all the issues that we do face and how they affect Holyoke."

Churchwell feels the council has worked well together even though not everyone agrees on everything all the time. "I think we're set up to where we can have disagreements around the table but once a decision is made we are all standing behind it and we still walk out as friends."

He feels it is important to have people on the council that are willing to take the time and effort to research issues and talk to some of the citizens of Holyoke. "I want to make sure whoever runs is willing to take that time and I am willing to take that time and effort to research those issues and make the best decisions I can," Churchwell said.

Looking into the future, Churchwell would like to see the quality of services offered by the city stay at a high level and reasonable cost. He noted the power contract is going to be coming due in the next few years and it will be a big issue to get it renewed at a reasonable price.

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Churchwell said it is also important to continue looking at economic development but at the same time giving current businesses the chance to thrive.

Churchwell grew up in Limon where he graduated from high school. He obtained a degree from Colorado State University in electrical engineering prior to moving to Oregon where he worked for an electrical cooperative.

Churchwell and his family moved to Holyoke in 1999 when he was hired as operations manager at Highline Electric—a position he still holds today.

He and wife Nicole have three children, Zachary 12, Ashlyn 11 and Braxten 5. He has served on the Holyoke Volunteer Fire Department since 2003 and currently serves as second assistant chief.

He also helps with Phillips County Pheasants Forever and designed and updates their website. He is also a member of Zion Lutheran Church.

Churchwell is on the police committee, office committee and fire pension board. He was very involved with getting the police department back to full force. He said he and council member Steve Moore put in a lot of time and they still have things they are working on.

**Scott Murray**

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