

Steve Dunn Rebuttal Responses

DEVELOPMENT

1. You support slowing development to preserve rural character, but also say taxes rise without growth. What specific growth rate do you believe balances both goals?

The best way to control rising taxes is to get the budget in order. Once the budget is stable, the Village can bring in development strategically and allow the budget to grow with the new revenue. The most basic rule of responsible budgeting is simple: **don't spend more than you bring in.**

2. You oppose big-box development but support business investment. What criteria would you use to determine which businesses fit the Village's character?

I believe residents prefer “mom and pop”-style businesses. There should be a place for any business that wants to come to Salem Lakes. I am not automatically against big-box development, but it must be in the right location and make sense to the residents.

TAXES & FISCAL STABILITY

3. You propose reducing outsourcing and using volunteers for tasks like mowing. How would you guarantee reliability and safety if essential services depend on volunteer labor?

For the fire department, I meant bringing back volunteers on a paid-on-call basis. For mowing and similar tasks, the Village could hire college students or retirees looking for part-time or temporary work and pay them a reasonable wage. The Village already has the equipment needed.

4. You emphasize cutting wants over needs. What specific Village expenditures would you cut first to stabilize the budget?

I would focus on reducing:

- Legal expenses
- Excessive payroll
- Department of Public Works equipment purchases, because I believe we already have a surplus

I would also work to bring the building department back under Village control instead of contracting with the county, so Salem Lakes keeps all permit-fee revenue.

PUBLIC INPUT

5. You emphasize listening to residents. How would you handle situations where the community is deeply divided and no clear majority emerges?

If the community is split, I would make the decision that is in the best long-term interest of the Village, considering both present and future impacts. A trustee cannot make everyone happy all the time, and sometimes unpopular decisions must be made.

6. You criticize the current Board for limited transparency. What concrete steps would you implement in your first 90 days to improve public trust?

I would take several steps to increase transparency:

- Schedule public involvement sessions for residents and business owners to share concerns
- Reopen comments on the Village's Facebook page
- Limit closed-session meetings to only what is absolutely necessary
- Hold open houses so residents can discuss concerns about nearby developments, while also providing information so people understand what is happening