



2024

# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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[www.fhchamber.com](http://www.fhchamber.com)

# **FH LEGISLATIVE REPORT PROCESS DESCRIPTION**

The Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce is invested in bringing awareness to our community regarding candidates who will be in our local election this year. The FH Chamber Board of Directors created a process in hopes to identify those who may best represent the specific interests of the business community if serving in office for Fountain Hills.

To do so, we invited all candidates to respond to both a written questionnaire and a brief interview with the FH Chamber Board of Directors. This report was created solely from scoring those two methods.

A variety of issues impacting our local businesses and organizations were addressed within the questions asked of the candidates. They included topics on:  
Town's policies and resources,  
Strategic and General Plan,  
collaboration and partnerships,  
Town vision, personal goals,  
advocacy, representation, demographics,  
workforce environment and more.

The candidates' blind responses (Board Directors scored each response without revealing the name of the candidate) and interviews were then scored to issue a letter grade. This process was implemented in May and completed in June. The data was collected, scores weighted and grades were finalized on June 28th.

We recognize the need for knowledgeable, visionary and servant leaders who listen, support and respond for the benefit of our community - residents, visitors, businesses and organizations.

We encourage our membership and community to access available resources in an effort to cast an informed and confident vote.

# Process Components & Timeline

*Here's another look at the components of the FH Chamber Legislative Report Process. Every candidate was given the same timeline and all candidates successfully completed the process. FH Chamber Board Directors turned in their scores by June 20th.*

**FH CHAMBER  
BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS  
INTERVIEWED  
CANDIDATES**

**SCORES  
COMPLETED BY  
JUNE 12TH**

**OVERALL  
ELEMENTS OF  
CANDIDATES**

**SCORES  
COMPLETED BY  
JUNE 12TH**

**WRITTEN  
SURVEY WITH  
“BLIND”  
RATINGS**

**SCORES  
COMPLETED BY  
JUNE 20TH**

**DATA  
TABULATION  
WAS  
IMPLEMENTED  
TO CREATE  
CANDIDATE  
GRADES.**

**COMPLETED BY  
JUNE 28TH**

2024

# Meet the Candidates

*Candidates own submissions*



# LEGISLATIVE REPORT



# Meet the Mayoral Candidates

*Submission by:*

## JOE ARPAIO

Joe Arpaio has a lifetime of decorated service encompassing 55 years. Arpaio volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1950 serving 12 years. He was a cop in D.C. and Las Vegas, an official for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, and Diplomatic Attache.



Arpaio was the top law enforcement official for Fountain Hills for 30 years, 24 as Sheriff and 6 as Arizona D.E.A. director. Arpaio received numerous awards from countries foreign/domestic and featured in over 5,000 news-media. Arpaio has lived in Fountain Hills for 24 years, married to his wife, Ava, for 63 years, has 2 children, 4 grandchildren.

*Submission by:*  
Councilmember

## GERRY FREIDEL

Gerry was a Community Banker for almost 40 years. He specialized in lending and started a Financial Planning Center, growing the Center from 0 to over



\$40 million in assets. Gerry completed his college education by 11 years of night school while working full time. Another 5 years of night school earned him Financial Paraplanner Certification. This same discipline has been demonstrated by his volunteer service to the Fountain Hills community and his work as a Town Councilmember. It will continue to serve the people of Fountain Hills as the future Mayor of our Town. Gerry has served almost 4 years as a council member and 1 year on the Strategic Planning Commission.

*Submission by:*

Mayor

## GINNY DICKEY

Born in NY, Mayor Ginny Dickey lived in VT and NH before following her parents' lead and moving to Fountain Hills in 1983. Her siblings relocated, as well, creating a foundation that spans multiple generations.



Married to Jim Dickey, their family includes Ginny's three sons, Jim's daughter and son, spouses and nine grandchildren.

Bio Briefs:

- Mathematics Degree, Tufts University
- Mayor, 2018-present
- Town Councilwoman, 2006-2014
- School Board, 1994-2002
- State of Arizona, Retired
- US Attorney's Office
- Banker
- Bookkeeper
- Theater Treasurer, Founders Award
- Charter Member, Arts Council (FHCCA)
- Sunset Kiwanis
- FH Hall of Fame 2010

See full bio at [www.ginnydickeyformayor.com](http://www.ginnydickeyformayor.com)

# Meet the Town Council Candidates

*Submission by:*

## CLAYTON COREY

Clayton Corey has been a dedicated resident of Fountain Hills for over 8 years, enjoying hiking, biking, kayaking, and volunteering. He has served on the Planning & Zoning

Commission since 2019 and the Sanitary District since 2023. Clayton is committed to non-partisan decision-

making and enhancing infrastructure, promoting economic growth, and balancing responsible development with preservation. He supports investments in streets, sidewalks, and public facilities for safety and accessibility, and advocates for mixed-use developments and small businesses. With 12 years as a Senior Manager in IT Infrastructure, Clayton brings professional expertise to his campaign.



Visit [ClaytonCorey.com](http://ClaytonCorey.com) for more information.

*Submission by:*

## MATHEW CORRIGAN

Mathew Corrigan is a Fountain Hills homeowner and full time resident and a candidate for Town Council.

After becoming active in Fountain Hills issues and speaking about Fountain Hills issues in Town Council meetings, Planning and Zoning meetings and opinion



letters to the Fountain Hills Independent, several people encouraged Corrigan to become a candidate for Fountain Hills Town Council to help bring meaningful solutions to Fountain Hills.. Those solutions involve the repair and improvement of roads, infrastructure, and public safety. Local small businesses need town support and need a new approach to economic development.

His website is [Corrigan4Council.com](http://Corrigan4Council.com).

*Submission by:*

## GAYLE EARLE

I am a wife, mother, grandmother, and small business owner. I'm also the dog-parent to our lively Labrador retriever, Gunnar! My husband, Larry, and I moved to Fountain Hills



in 2006. Like most people, we were drawn to the beautiful views, quiet neighborhoods, dark skies, and the safe small-town atmosphere. Fountain Hills is truly an Oasis in the Desert! I am not a politician but I am a hard worker who's built a successful business, one customer at a time. I'm running for Council to ensure that Fountain Hills remains a special place to live, work, invest, and play.

# Meet the Town Council Candidates

Submission by:  
Councilmember

## PEGGY MCMAHON

Peggy McMahon has lived in FH for over 21 years and is a strong leader in our community.

She is the only councilmember running for reelection! Why, because she loves this town and representing our whole community.



Peggy is responsible steward of our town budget, and supports

- Local businesses
- Smart controlled growth
- Added \$7M to our street repair fund
- Voted for MCSO safety contract
- Brought our fire department in-house
- Serves on 9 different boards and committees
- Holds a Juris Doctor
- Graduate FH Leadership Academy
- Understands the issues and provides resolutions

To learn more about Peggy, go to <https://keeppeggymcmahon.com/>

Art Tolis, a former Town Council member (2016-2020), was key in developments like the 24/7 Saguaro Urgent Care, Adero Canyon, Copperwynd Hotel expansion, and luxury Pillar properties downtown. He promotes Fountain Hills as the "Beverly Hills of Arizona" and aims to complete the downtown and Target Plaza, adding financial stability (sales Tax revenues) and community vibrancy to these targeted areas of town. An active community member for 22+ years, Art has led the Four Peaks Rotary as President two terms, and served on various boards, including the Chamber of Commerce, Alan Cruickshank River of Times Museum, Scottsdale Association of realtors/Fountain Hills Realtors Board. He owns Tolis Mortgage Financial Group and Snap Fitness. A graduate of Syracuse University and University of Washington Pacific coast banking school master certificate. After a focus on family and business for the last four years, Art seeks your support for a second term on Council.

Submission by:

## HENRY MALE

He's a registered independent. The Male family moved to FH 21 years ago. He has worked in broadcasting, VP of a Domino's Pizza group and automotive sales since 1991, the last 21 years for the Penske Automotive Group, currently as Director of Internet sales for two stores. He recently retired as President of the FH Theater Board of Directors. He's active with outreach programs (been to Haiti 3 times, provide clothing for school kids and meals at the East Valley Men's Center). His wife, Donna, retired from 17 years of teaching for the FH School District.



Submission by:

## ART TOLIS



# Meet the Town Council Candidates

*Submission by:*

## **ROBERT WALLACE**

Robert Wallace, a student of philosophy with a background in I.T. support and real estate, is a patriot dedicated to civic involvement. He leads an advocacy group in Arizona focused on protecting children from harmful influences disguised as inclusive education.

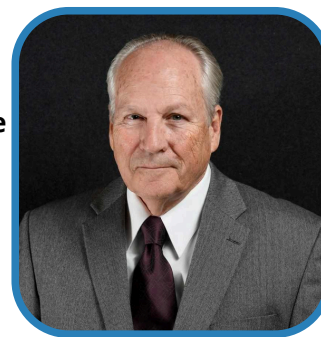


Having traveled to 65 countries and all seven continents, Robert has seen the effects of poor policies firsthand. He is committed to preventing Fountain Hills' fiscal priorities and lax safety standards from compromising its infrastructure, security, and future. Robert believes that proactive, informed citizens can make a difference in ensuring a safer community. For more information, please visit [Robert4You.com](http://Robert4You.com).

*Submission by:*

## **RICK WATTS**

Resident of the Fountain Hills for 35+ years. Business owner, contractor and strong advocate of servant leadership. Most importantly I have an in-depth understanding of finances including planning, forecasting and budgets.



Currently serving on the ToFH Planning and Zoning Commission you can see how I consider each issue, my approach, demeanor and underlying logic regarding a variety of concerns.

My platform is simple and straight forward revolving around Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability, Fire and Life Safety, Law Enforcement accountability, Existing and new business development and support. Open minded objective listening is and will remain my hallmark when elected to office.



2024

Written Survey Process



# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

All candidates participated in a written survey consisting of seven questions.

Each answer was scored anonymously, ensuring that Board members were unaware of the candidates' identities when rating the responses.

The Mayoral and Town Council candidates with the most favorable responses are identified on the following pages, next to each question.

The scores from the written survey were weighted to comprise 65% of the overall evaluation.

**OVERALL  
MOST FAVORABLE IN  
WRITTEN SURVEY**

**MAYORAL**



**GINNY DICKEY**

**TOWN  
COUNCIL**



**ART TOLIS**

# BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE PER QUESTION



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**ART  
TOLIS**

Per the Town of Fountain Hills rules and procedures, town council members agree to the following "RECOGNIZE THAT THE CHIEF FUNCTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS AT ALL TIMES TO SERVE THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE." In order to achieve this, what resources would you rely on to confidently make decisions that represent the best interests of all people?



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**ART  
TOLIS**

The median age in Fountain Hills is 59.7 years old. How do you perceive this median age group impacts our local business community, and what strategies do you propose to address any challenges or leverage opportunities stemming from this demographic profile?



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**HENRY  
MALE**

As the largest employer in Fountain Hills, do you advocate to improve the Fountain Hills Unified School District's facilities and infrastructure? If no, do you have an alternative vision or proposals that might impact the presence of our Fountain Hills public schools?



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**ART  
TOLIS**

What is your assessment of the current state of workforce issues in our town? If there are challenges what are the issues and how would you plan to address them as a town council member?



# CONTINUED...

## BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE PER QUESTION



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**ART  
TOLIS**

What is your vision for our town's population over the next decade? Do you desire to see it grow beyond its current level of around 24,000, or do you advocate for maintaining this population size? Could you elaborate on the reasons behind your vision and the strategies you would pursue to achieve it?



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**CLAYTON  
COREY**

What do you think should be done with the empty commercial space in our town? Do you have plans, as a council member, to address this issue?



**JOE ARPAIO**



**ART  
TOLIS**

In your opinion, what role should the town council play in balancing the needs of businesses with those of residents and ensuring that ordinances reflect the interests of both parties?

# BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE - QUESTION 1



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**ART  
TOLIS**

Per the Town of Fountain Hills rules and procedures, town council members agree to the following "RECOGNIZE THAT THE CHIEF FUNCTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS AT ALL TIMES TO SERVE THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE." In order to achieve this, what resources would you rely on to confidently make decisions that represent the best interests of all people?

## ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER

**Mathew Corrigan:** Section 8.5 of the Town of Fountain Hills Rules of Procedure, dated 9/06/23 as stated in the above question also states, "We shall treat our office as a public trust, only using the power and resources of public office to advance public interests and not to attain personal benefit or pursue any other private interest incompatible with the public good. Our decisions and actions will be guided by the best interests of the community we serve."

Not only do we have a public forum to show how individuals with disparate points of view can find common ground and seek compromise that benefits the community as a whole but we must also keep a focus on the future to keep the essential elements of what has made Fountain Hills the best place in Arizona to live.

If elected, as a Fountain Hills Town Council member I will uphold the wishes of my constituents and balance this with the rules of Procedure, to the best possible benefit to the Town of Fountain Hills.

**Gayle Earle:** As a councilmember, I am first and foremost responsible to the citizens of our town. When making decisions in the best interest of our residents, I will actively listen to fully understand what is most important to them. I will give strong credence to the recommendations of the Planning and Zoning and other committees that bring researched information to us. I will also do my own research so I am always making an informed decision.

I am aware that not everyone will be happy with decisions made so I will be as transparent as possible with my decision-making.

If I am honored to hold the position of Town Councilmember, I will uphold the foundation on which our Founding Fathers built our Country: "WE THE PEOPLE" to whom all governmental positions in our Nation are accountable.

**Art Tolis:** As a previous Fountain Hills Town Council member, I prioritize representing the best interests of our community, even though not everyone will always agree with our initiatives. Our focus must include targeted development and completing strategic plans already voted on, emphasizing the importance of raising sales tax revenues and creating a vibrant business climate. This approach is essential for maintaining our infrastructure and creating a dynamic community with world class amenities, while preserving our unique small-town charm. I encourage residents to participate in meetings and share their insights, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in our decision-making process. Together, we can address challenges and ensure our town prospers.

**Joe Arpaio:** I will govern independently of party politics or special interest group and pursue the best interests of the people of Fountain Hills always. I will work through issues with everyone on the Council just like I did with other political figures as Sheriff. I refuse to run as part of a partisan political slate, which my opponents are both leaders of political slates. Partisan political slates are a conflict of interest to the best interests of the people of the town.

**Council Member Gerry Friedel:** I think getting stakeholders input and involvement is very important in any decision that we make as council members. The use of town hall meetings, surveys, workshops, and in person discussions are important homework that has to be done. Specifically, the service clubs, FHCCA, the Chamber, and other organizations who contribute should have a voice in determining the direction of our town. Additionally these organizations are all made up of different people from all walks of life and represent a large swath of our community.

**Clayton Corey:** To make decisions that best represent the interests of all Fountain Hills residents, I will rely on a comprehensive set of resources. The Fountain Hills General Plan 2020 guides our town's growth and the maintenance of our infrastructure to meet both current and future needs. Similarly, the Fountain Hills Strategic Plan 2022 outlines strategies to enhance community vitality, improve infrastructure, and ensure economic stability. Regular community engagement through surveys and public meetings is crucial, as it ensures our decisions reflect the diverse needs and values of our community. Additionally, I will utilize detailed economic and infrastructure reports that provide data on economic trends and the condition of essential infrastructure, aiding in strategic planning.

**Rick Watts:** Open minded objective listening is and will remain my hallmark when elected to office. Objective listening is the skill and expertise to work with others to find reasonable solutions. To reach a common ground that focuses on the town and not the individual. Listening to others positions to understand and not to refute a position, review any supporting data, analyze options and strive to find a reasonable solution without conceding principles. That is how I intend to win over the other council members to work to the betterment of the town and our residents.

## Continued... ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER.

**Mayor Ginny Dickey:** There are several conduits that provide well-rounded information, listed in no particular order:

- a. Town staff, including fire and law enforcement personnel, are the on-the-ground eyes and ears. Being experts in their fields makes their input critical to sound decision making.
  - b. Volunteer commissions and committees provide targeted analysis depending on the subject area. Their recommendations as advisory to the Council become part of the totality of information gathered for consideration.
  - c. In-person interaction, Council meeting attendance and comments, plus calls, emails, letters to the paper and a variety of social media provide local viewpoints. That said, social media sometimes is not conducive to good governance. Misinformation takes us in directions that feed division and give a false impression of the goals of the majority. We consumers of data must be curious and discerning, especially with our new "resource," AI.
  - d. Business, non-profits and other groups such as the Chamber, social service, faith-based, HOA's, arts and veterans' organizations provide a special perspective.
  - e. The Town created a Strategic Communications Plan, furthering the intention behind hiring a Community Relations Director of robust two-way exchanges of fact-based ideas, plans and desired goals.
  - f. The Town has utilized expert assessments, surveys and community meetings regarding a number of issues in order to gauge next steps and create strategic plans to guide us all in good-faith efforts for positive outcomes.
  - g. Regional, Statewide and national leaders are excellent means for both existing and new issues to providing creative and positive tools for policy makers.
- Combined, these resources and more provide the basis for decision-making when addressed in a professional environment where mutual respect exists.

**Robert Wallace:** As a candidate for Town Council, I wholeheartedly embrace Fountain Hills' principle: local government exists to serve everyone's best interests. To ensure I make decisions that uphold this commitment, I rely on a variety of resources.

Firstly, I prioritize listening to our community. Whether it's at council meetings, in public forums, or through social media, I actively seek out residents' thoughts and concerns. Their voices guide my decision-making process.

Secondly, I value evidence-based insights. By consulting town staff, reviewing data, and seeking input from experts, I ensure my decisions are well-informed and grounded in facts.

Additionally, I understand the importance of community organizations. By engaging with them and considering their perspectives, I gain a deeper understanding of our town's diverse needs.

Ultimately, my approach is rooted in transparency, accountability, and inclusivity. By leveraging these resources, I am confident in my ability to represent the best interests of all Fountain Hills residents.

**Council Member Peggy McMahon:** A Councilmember must listen to the community it serves and take advantage of various resources to learn more about his/her constituents. Fountain Hills residents are very active and involved in our community and its governance. No matter how they communicate to you, calling, emailing or through public comments at council meetings or socializing in less informal settings such as church groups, clubs and at local events, letting them know you are open to hearing their views, is key to knowing the community.

The Chamber and Town events also provide invaluable resources to discover how to serve the best interests of our community. Volunteering at these events and festivals, and participating in public service opportunities, helps build and strengthen community relationships that provide council members with a better understanding of the community's needs and outlooks on the future of the town. Chamber activities especially, will help understand the needs of local businesses, the status of the workforce and the overall vitality of our business community. Councilmembers must stay formed by listening to council advisory commissions and committees, and emergency responders; recommendations and reports on matters before council. Additionally, the Town Staff gives invaluable advice, for they also listen to the community and pay heed to town needs and make invaluable recommendations. Lastly, utilize the media to stay abreast of local opinions. Read The FH Independent, The Insider, the Chamber website and newsletter. Monitor town social media posts to learn what your constituents share about the town and discover what they are concerned about. As a Councilmember, serving the best interests of the whole community at times will be challenging because the reality is that we live in a divisive and partisan society that reflects national values, and not always our shared community values. Many council decisions will not be understood or liked by all. Nevertheless, councilmembers need to advance shared interests and address community needs impartially and in a non-partisan manner.

**Henry Male:** In theory, town council is designed to be non-partisan in nature, which is a logical starting point for serving the best interests of all, but I recognize that there is a healthy mix of varying opinions in Fountain Hills. My friends span both parties and a growing number are independents like me, so I'm well positioned to seek, evaluate, and apply a broad spectrum of points of view.

## BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE - QUESTION 2



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**ART  
TOLIS**

The median age in Fountain Hills is 59.7 years old. How do you perceive this median age group impacts our local business community, and what strategies do you propose to address any challenges or leverage opportunities stemming from this demographic profile?

### ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER

**JOE ARPAIO:** There is amazing wisdom in our community. For example, look at the makeup of our Street Committee and the street repair study they did for free. My opponents ignored their work and failed to fund our streets. I will embrace the vast resources & wisdom we have right in our community and citizens will guide the Council on what is best for the town.

**CLAYTON COREY:** I understand that our median age of nearly 60 affects our local businesses. Older residents usually have more money to spend, which is great for businesses like healthcare, leisure, and specialty shops. But, there are challenges too, like finding workers for physically tough jobs and appealing to younger folks. To tackle these issues and make the most of the opportunities, I plan to push for mixed-use housing that attracts a mix of ages. This kind of development makes our town more inviting for younger families and different types of businesses.

**RICK WATTS:** Town Council in collaboration with the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce (FHCC) must continue to work towards finding creative, outside the box, ways to support all businesses both inside and outside of the immediate downtown area, encouraging residents to utilize our local partners. Businesses outside of the immediate downtown area must not be forgotten and must also be supported.

A few thoughts to consider to assist local businesses:

- Creation of a web page on the Fountain Hills town government website mirroring the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce website listing all businesses holding Town Fountain Hills business licenses
- Development of an Interactive smart phone map app with links to business details and specials
- Incentives for residents to support T.A.M.A businesses. Punch cards come to mind that offer a nominal discount after 10 uses or for Arizona residents
- Encouraging all local businesses to join the T.A.M.A organization
- Consideration by the Town Council to add covered parking along the avenue
- Developing and adding promotions and events that encourage residents to patronize businesses during the cooler evening hours after the sunset
- T.A.M.A supported advertising through the local newspaper at discounted rates

**ROBERT WALLACE:** I Having a median age at around 60 effects how this town feels and really colors the character of it. It sets this chill, resort-like vibe which is great but also comes with its own set of challenges for our local businesses. As someone eyeing a spot on the town council, I'm seeing how this demographic is a big deal for our business scene. It means we've got to come up with smart ideas to meet their needs and make the most of the opportunities.

First off, these folks are into specialized services, especially in healthcare and wellness. We should be all about boosting healthcare facilities, throwing support behind specialized medical practices, and pushing for more home health care services.

We want to make sure that we continue to keep the community engaged. We've already got a good thing going, but we need to amp it up. More activities for the older crowd, better ways for them to get around town – it's all about keeping them active and involved.

Plus, we've got to hook them up with job opportunities that fit their lifestyle. Think flexible gigs, part-time work – stuff that gives them a sense of purpose and lets them use their skills.

Tech training is key too. We've gotta help them get savvy with the digital world so they're not left behind.

Of course, leisure and recreation are big deals for these guys. We've gotta make sure Fountain Hills stays a top spot for them to kick back and have fun.

And let's get real about marketing – we need to tailor our strategies to this crowd. Loyalty programs, promotions – we gotta make sure they're speaking their language.

If we get these moves in motion, we can make sure our local businesses are not only taking care of our older residents but also cashing in on the opportunities that come with our median age vibe.

**HENRY MALE:** Those of us who enjoy FH citizenship comprise a median age of 59.7 years and this skew affirms that we may be drifting towards retirement community status. If we want to retain our vibrancy as a balanced community, we need to focus on attracting a younger demographic. According to the FH Chamber of Commerce data, the majority of our town is retired (51.1%). So we need to make adding young families to our town's profile a focus. We have a fantastic school system that needs to have their school rooms filled. More families bring more disposable dollars to be spent in FH. More people bring more prospective employees too. A business can open their doors but if they don't have staffing to satisfy the needs of their customers, then survivability is threatened. Currently, according to the Chamber's data only .2% (as in less than one percent!) are seeking employment. Anything that can positively affect growth in FH must be considered and implemented as often as possible.



## Continued...ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER - QUESTION 2

**ART TOLIS:** The median age of 59.7 in Fountain Hills reflects financial stability and the active ages of our residents. Per capita income is among the highest in the state and those living in Fountain Hills predominantly can afford to live in our community. These residents are benefiting the local economy. Our strategies need to strongly Promote Shop and Dine Local. Educating the residents as to how the Town finances are impacted by sales tax revenues is critical to the buy local initiative.

In addition, a challenge we face is housing options. We should expand quality housing options for residence that want to downsize and stay in the community such as supporting the Downtown additional phases and Target plaza upscale apartments. This will open housing inventory for new residents. Enhancing amenities and creating the business environment for investment and encouraging residents to shop and dine locally will drive long-term success. Balancing age demographics, supporting families, and fostering a strong school district will maintain property values and our community. Promoting Fountain Hills as the "Beverly Hills of Arizona," strengthening ties with Fort McDowell, and boosting tourism are critical for sustainable growth and prosperity and are all strategies for success long term. Age is just a number. We need to promote our active adult community as an advantage and encourage further investment in our amazing town.

**MATHEW CORRIGAN:** The greatest advantage of age may be experience. It was in the Old Testament of the Bible and Job said it best. In Job 12:12 Job says, "Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days." With a median age in Fountain Hills of 59.7 years we certainly have a great advantage. According to the 2022 U.S. census, Fountain Hills is wealthier than most towns, with a median income of \$100,317. According to the same census, 97.8% of Fountain Hills has an education level of high school graduation or higher. According to a 3/29/24 Fountain Hills times article we enjoy an unusually high percentage of volunteers, "saving hundreds of thousands of dollars of expenses." So all this also means we have more discretionary income to support local businesses. We are rated very high by "Best places" to live. So what are the challenges? According to the same "Best places" website, some of our local concerns are maintaining the infrastructure and also Public safety. These are two of my four key goals, objectives and concerns as a future Councilman.

**COUNCILMEMBER GERRY FRIEDEL:** The median age of our town is definitely a factor in decisions facing our business community. We as leaders need to do everything within our power to help promote our business community. This includes fair sign ordinances, extending premises when we can, and reviewing zoning regulations that handcuff or restrict business expansion. We should also have a permit process that allows for flexibility for new and existing businesses that want to expand. Where I came from we had a central business district. We closed the Main Street on a weekend here and there and it was a huge success for the businesses, people walked, listened to music ate good food and it drew the attention of even the older demographic to the downtown. We could certainly try something like this here once or twice a month. We can't immediately change our age demographic so we have to at least in the short term find ways to engage with them. Music and wine are definitely an attraction that we can use. We could also partner with the IDSDC and co host events with the business community, offer different opportunities and discounts creating a unique experience that no one else can replicate.

**GINNY DICKEY:** There's no question that the median age affects our business community, not only in the nature of goods and services desired, provided and consumed, but when, where and how. A comprehensive business plan that recognizes those demographics is key to success. Comprehending that information is complex but necessary for best practices and outcomes.

Challenges to meeting the needs of the current and possible future demographic include seasonal impacts, employment supply, multi-tier marketing... figuring out the best way to reach different consumers... and accessibility.

Leveraging existing opportunities requires an understanding of those existing challenges. The Town's Economic Development Department partners with the Chamber, State, County, Tribes, non-profits, GPEC, East Valley Partnership and more to navigate these waters.

Do we want to go all-in with being a retirement community, which would allow us to focus in on the expectations of that scenario? Recognize that between May and October we basically hibernate, set our sights on activities and services catering to a more senior population? That is one direction that can be successful in its own right.

That is definitely not the camp I am or have ever been in. A thriving downtown, community-wide enthusiasm and energy, award winning parks, continued events that families and younger people enjoy, stellar education including daycare, Dark Sky Center, sports and outdoor living and our active economic and tourism pursuits help attract and welcome multigenerational residents.

No matter the demographics, we should continue to seek to provide more transportation options, including safe, walkable connectivity and expand our already excellent health and wellness for all ages. The emphasis on physical fitness in Fountain Hills is impressive and another great example of a benefit for all.

The questions below about schools, housing and employment will further touch on this discussion about what direction we are headed. Having an increasing median age population can be in part a result of perception of the community. Competitive and varied housing options as passed by the voters and supported by several Commissions and Councils, K-12, higher and specialized education, and adequate built infrastructure such as transportation and technology, grows the population and will lower the median age.

**COUNCILMEMBER PEGGY MCMAHON:** This age group represents a large demographic of our community. Understanding their preferences, interests and behaviors, and tailoring products and services for them, enable the Town and Chamber to leverage opportunities for them to thrive. Our Community Services Department offers an array of recreational activities, educational classes and workshops, and discussion groups. Our beautiful parks cater to this age group by offering many physical active options and even outdoor gym equipment. There are miles of bike lanes, hiking trails for nature and stargazing enthusiasts and safe sidewalks to encourage walking in town. Our community thrives because of volunteers and public service. There are so many opportunities for 60 year old residents to leverage their education and professional experience. One way is to become a respected and recognized town leader by serving on a town commission or committee providing innovative solutions on important town matters that influence the future or our town. There are also many establishments, including the Chamber, that offer places to gather socially and take advantage of networking opportunities. The Town and Chamber partner together to offer popular cultural and community events at Fountain Park and along Avenue of the Fountains. These events offer new and innovative opportunities to plan and create events that reflect this age group's interests and demographics. Further, in anticipation of their retirement, many local businesses are available to help them navigate their retirement financial planning, investment management and address their changing insurance needs. This age group has endless opportunities to participate, leverage their experience and knowledge, improve their health and welfare, volunteer and socialize with their peers. These opportunities encourage investment in their community that will result in a more fulfilling lifestyle, create an environment that reflects their values and leverages their leadership skills. Fountain Hills' most valuable asset is its people. Let's be sure to encourage this age group's involvement and leverage their opportunities to share their experiences and become the future leaders of our community.

**GAYLE EARLE:** The median age for our Town was 54 years old in 2010. This median age increased to 59.7 over a period of 14 years which indicates our residents love where they live and wish to stay in this wonderful community of ours. I do not see the median age as a detriment but rather as a benefit. Fountain Hills has one of the highest rates of volunteerism compared to other communities. Fountain Hills main source of revenue is derived from Sales Tax, and so having a demographic with more disposable income than other demographics is certainly a benefit to our Town. Our community is on average an affluent town. We have many generous residents willing and able to donate their time and resources to our town, including spending money locally at our small businesses.

# BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE - QUESTION 3



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**HENRY  
MALE**

As the largest employer in Fountain Hills, do you advocate to improve the Fountain Hills Unified School District's facilities and infrastructure? If no, do you have an alternative vision or proposals that might impact the presence of our Fountain Hills public schools?

## ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER

**HENRY MALE:** I am a strong supporter of the school district. My daughter is a graduate of our system, before retiring my wife taught there for many years. It is a very good school district and deserves respect for the value it adds to our homes. Our award winning school district has served the community well and we should all remember that its existence is a property value PLUS and every dime we invest comes back to us as dollars in home value. In order to attract more citizens to FH, we must have a viable and safe school district to appeal to prospective families. As a town, we need to stand behind the school district both emotionally and fiscally.

**COUNCILMEMBER PEGGY MCMAHON:** As the largest employer in Fountain Hills, the Fountain Hills Unified School District (FHUSD) is a major part of our business community. The FHUSD is a prominent member of our local business community and enjoys strong partnerships with parents, community members, other local businesses and large stakeholders in town. In that regard, they should be treated like other businesses in town who are required to maintain their buildings so that they are up to code and acceptable business standards. Like FHUSD, businesses have capital expenditures necessary to keep themselves in business, maintain their property and serve their clients. It is a well accepted business practice for businesses to pay for capital improvements with capital improvement loans. The school' districts version of that is a bond measure. A bond measure that would have paid for necessary capital building maintenance and improvement expenses, improved the safety and security of our students, updated technology and the school grounds. Everyday necessities to run a school business and maintain its facilities. I supported the bond as a smart business decision for FHUSD. It was very disappointing when the FHUSD bond measure did not pass and the majority of our community failed to support our largest employer and the economic vitality it adds to our town and community. Until the state stops defunding schools and the needed capital expenditure bonds stop being mislabeled as a "bad debt" in our town, the business of FHUSD is forced to rely on the dedication of our teachers and students and their families's fundraising efforts, and the limited FHUSD budget to maintain our schools and aging infrastructure. There is no way fundraising will cover their necessary business costs. Accordingly, there is a legitimate concern that the largest employer in town will eventually go out of business due to the lack of necessary operating funds. Sadly, this would reduce our property values, raise our taxes, split up our students into neighboring school districts outside of town, and deny local control of our children and grandchildren's education. As far as my vision for the future, FHUSD will hopefully continue to take advantage of partnerships with strong stakeholders like ASU to enable our students to take college level classes and receive credit as part of their high school curriculum. Also, explore UA's interest in having a future satellite campus in town (possibly at one of the district's school buildings?). I envision more such opportunities for our schools, and appreciate Dr. Jagodzinski's dedication in providing invaluable opportunities for our students and being a responsible steward of the FHUSD budget to keep our FHUSD in operation.

**ROBERT WALLACE:** As the biggest employer in Fountain Hills, I get how important our local schools are. Sure, we need to improve their facilities and infrastructure to give our kids the best shot at success. But I'm also about thinking outside the box. Instead of just throwing money at the problem, let's brainstorm some fresh ideas. How about partnering with local businesses for funding or getting parents and community members involved in improvement projects? And let's not forget about making sure our schools are fostering creativity and excellence in education. Maybe we could explore new programs or opportunities for teachers to keep things exciting in the classroom. So the bottom line is I'm all about finding practical solutions that make our schools even better places for our kids to learn and grow within and giving our town a great reputation for education that will draw in more families.

**MAYOR GINNY DICKEY:** The answer is an unequivocal yes. Without a robust public-school environment with an excellent reputation, our community will not attract the young families we hope will step in with fresh ideas and keep alive the groups, organizations, businesses and leadership needed for a bright future. The school district deserves our support. Having a professional staff that is effective, creative and fully engaged in education without significant turnover is critical. Teachers impact the lives of our youth. In terms of the economy and employees, FHUSD is the largest business in Fountain Hills. The Town has been in discussions regarding joining the District for advertising and public outreach in addition to our existing facility and event IGA's. They serve the same taxpayers and constituencies. Not unlike your home, the basis for a good community school system is excellent facilities that are supported by the necessary funding to maintain them and address ever-changing program, technological and security needs. Unfortunately, our community is lacking in those areas, in part based upon decades long inadequate state funding and recent changing local dynamics. Without a healthy, financed and supported public-school system, our community will suffer in the eyes of prospective businesses, residents, parents, visitors and investors.

**RICK WATTS:** I am an advocate of striving for excellence in education but believe that the FHUSD needs to do a better job of prioritizing needs and wants. As I discussed with Dr J, after one of the three presentations I attended, I could have been a supporter for the bond issue had the audit issues been resolved. I believe that the FHUSD was year early in requesting a bond initiative. Dr J has done a good job with the resources at the disposal of the FHUSD but too many audit issues remained and a too many poor financial spending choices were made prior to the bond. Had the audit and more reasonable spend decisions been addressed I could have been a supporter.

## Continued...ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER - QUESTION 3

**CLAYTON COREY:** In my upcoming term on the Fountain Hills Town Council, I strongly advocate for improving the Fountain Hills Unified School District's facilities and infrastructure. As the largest employer in our town, the school district not only plays a crucial role in educating our youth but also significantly impacts our property values. Better schools make Fountain Hills more attractive to current and potential residents, enhancing our community's overall appeal and economic health.

**GERRY FRIEDEL:** As the largest employer, I agree that facilities and infrastructure must be maintained. As a council member I am consistent in my commitment to maintaining all of the town infrastructure not just roads. Maintaining the buildings and infrastructure attracts good employees, students, and homeowners. This benefits the whole community including our businesses. Perhaps a plan that looks at selling some of the vacant parcels ( as I mentioned above) would also help address capital projects and infrastructure needs of the district. I would be willing to assist in any discussion about this topic.

**JOE ARPAIO:** I have supported schools long before I became sheriff, when I was the head of the DEA. While Sheriff, one of my prime missions was to make schools a safe place for students and teachers. As Mayor, I would help schools every way I can. Schools are a pillar of our community.

**ART TOLIS:** As the largest employer in Fountain Hills, I strongly advocate for improving our school district's facilities and infrastructure. Quality education is vital for attracting and retaining families, thereby supporting community stability and property values. Investing in schools enhances our town's appeal and ensures a well-educated future workforce. Additionally, we should foster partnerships with local businesses and Fort McDowell (300 students in district roughly) to create opportunities for students and enrich the educational experience. This comprehensive approach will sustain our long-term success and solidify Fountain Hills as an attractive place for families and businesses alike.

**GAYLE EARLE:** Yes, I definitely do advocate to improve our School Facilities and Infrastructure. We need a safe environment for our future generation to learn and become productive citizens. I am very pleased to see the recent improvements, including the changes from the recent audit, and I support continuing in this direction within an allocated budget and shared vision for a quality comprehensive education and parental involvement.

**MATHEW CORRIGAN:** The question is, "do you advocate to improve the Fountain Hills Unified School District's facilities and infrastructure?" Maybe a more important question is, "how did the voters of Fountain Hills want to advocate to improve the Fountain Hills Unified School District?" In the last bond election voters decided to sell one of the properties of the School District. They also voted not to approve a \$25 million bond.

As Fountain Hills Town Council Candidate, I recognize that it is not under my authority to improve the Fountain Hills Unified School District. That authority and responsibility lies with the FHUSD Superintendent and with the FHUSD school board.

I support the success of the Fountain Hills Unified School District and often attend the monthly school board meetings. I have also voiced my concerns and my support in opportunities for public comments at those same meetings.

I believe an important part of any successful enterprise includes the ability to use all resources prudently and productively. Fiscal responsibility is an important part of that success component.

Many of us have experienced financial successes and failures and learned from those experiences.

# BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE - QUESTION 4



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**ART  
TOLIS**

What is your assessment of the current state of workforce issues in our town? If there are challenges what are the issues and how would you plan to address them as a town council member?

## ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER

**ROBERT WALLACE:** Right now, we've got some solid businesses in town, but there are definitely some challenges when it comes to our workforce. One big issue is attracting and retaining talent. With our median age around 60, we've got a lot of experienced folks in town, but we need to make sure we're also attracting younger workers to keep our workforce diverse and dynamic.

Another challenge is providing opportunities for career growth and development. We need to make sure our businesses are investing in training and education programs so that workers have the chance to move up the ladder and advance their careers right here in Fountain Hills.

And of course, there's the issue of affordable housing. We need to make sure that our workforce has access to housing that they can actually afford, so they're not forced to commute from outside of town. So, as a town council member, here's what I'd do to address these challenges:

First off, I'd work with local businesses to develop programs that attract and retain talent, whether that's offering competitive salaries, flexible work arrangements, or opportunities for professional development.

Next, I'd focus on investing in workforce training and education programs to make sure our workers have the skills they need to succeed in today's economy. And finally, I'd work to promote policies that encourage the development of affordable housing in town, so that our workforce can live and work right here in Fountain Hills.

**RICK WATTS:** Fountain Hills is struggling to attract service industry employees. Some of the issues are related to distances from higher density areas of adjoining cities and towns, another issue is the notoriously low wages paid in the service industry especially in food service and to some extent the lack of desire of many employable individuals to simply engage in the workforce. Potential solutions range from improving transportation options by making certain accommodations, compensating for drive distances and time, increasing hourly rates to name a few. I intend to discuss various options with the local businesses to understand their pain points and determine how the town can provide better support by encouraging potential employees to join our community.

**COUNCILMEMBER GERRY FRIEDEL:** According to MAG we have over 6000 locations that have 5 or more employees in Fountain Hills. I have talked to several business people who are still having trouble finding workers. Restaurants are definitely in need of additional help. We have definite opportunities in Healthcare, Hospitality, and Retail sectors. The council just recently had a visit and presentation from members at ASU looking at a possible strategic partnership. I think we should see if there might be a possible collaboration in setting up training in some of the areas where there are opportunities like Healthcare, and Hospitality. This would be a great opportunity to fill job gaps with good paying jobs, and an additional educational experience right here locally in Fountain Hills.

**ART TOLIS:** To address workforce issues in Fountain Hills, I advocate for encouraging high school internships and creating more affordable housing options. Converting appropriate commercial spaces to residential units can help young families and adults stay and work here. As a business owner with multiple local ventures, I know firsthand that filling minimum wage jobs is challenging, and high school students are a crucial source of labor. By fostering an environment where young professionals can afford to reside in Fountain Hills, we ensure a vibrant, sustainable future for our town, allowing those raised and educated here to return, live, and contribute to our local economy.

**MATHEW CORRIGAN:** Small businesses across the United States seem to be experiencing the same challenge. According to Forbes reporter Rodger Dean Duncan in a July 28, 2023 article, "How Covid changed the workplace; it's a whole new world out there."

He quotes the Gallup organization as finding:

1. 50% of 125 million full-time U.S. workers said they don't have to be in the workplace anymore because they discovered –thanks to the pandemic– that they can do their jobs from home.
2. A staggering 90% of U.S. employees with office jobs are not longing for the old workplace to return, and nearly 40% said they would change jobs to work full or part time from a flexible (non-office) location.

According to top statistic researchers at Gallup it means a change in the workforce. All this means that the decline in employee engagement with the employer has changed dramatically. As a result the workforce senses very little obligation to the employer. Having owned and operated a small business myself, I have complete empathy with the challenges of this new workforce. If elected to the Fountain Hills Town Council I pledge to do my best to help our local businesses achieve success. My key commitments are Traditional American values, Public safety, Economic stability (small businesses) and Fiscal responsibility.

**HENRY MALE:** Let's be honest - there are not enough prospective employees in this town. As stated earlier, according to the Chamber's data, there is only .02% of our population seeking work. That makes it nearly impossible for current and new employers to fully staff their businesses. We must earnestly work towards making FH readily affordable to those who aren't higher income families. We need more families, we need more businesses. This isn't a chicken or egg dichotomous quandry. These 3 issues, median age, school system, and workforce are inextricably tied together. Focusing on developing ways to attract families to our town helps our demographic, ensures vibrant schools as our centerpiece, and bolsters the local workforce.



## Continued...ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER - QUESTION 4

**MAYOR GINNY DICKEY:** Our median age could be translated as an imbalance between retired and employable persons, which affects our workforce options. We have many businesses (restaurant/hospitality, medical, retail, finance, real estate, etc.) but for some, local staff supply may be limited. Reasons include inadequate available housing options that affect our median age, and in turn, workforce supply for some of the jobs where shortages may exist. It appears some of the critical shortages have eased up, but that could somewhat be a natural result of the warmer weather. In fact, seasonal cycles are exacerbated by fewer full-time residents which is why addressing housing and attracting younger families is important to overall business vitality.

It is now fairly cost prohibitive for some educators, first responders and indeed many local employees to live here. I believe that residents feed business success, sustain a healthy school district, add to non-profit involvement and volunteerism, and provide an overall rich quality of life.

We recognize that working from home has become more common, too. Those jobs can supplement local business needs, as well, if they are supported with the amenities, safety and latest technology, and infrastructure to attract and keep them in Fountain Hills.

Fountain Hills leaders must continue to address the needs of our local business community through a coordinated effort. We may be facing a shift in employment needs in the future which can have a positive effect on all business ventures.

**COUNCILMEMBER PEGGY MCMAHON:** The lack of workers in our town is very challenging for our businesses, making it difficult to maintain and keep their businesses thriving. Many businesses, especially our restaurants, have continual Help Wanted signs. And the salaries earned by many blue collar and middle wage jobs just don't cut it in Fountain Hills' economy. Business owners find it difficult to keep workers due to the high cost of housing in Fountain Hills. Presently, we are at max rental capacity, which makes it very difficult to find a place to rent, much less one that offers reasonable rent. Potential employees would love to work in Fountain Hills but can't find a place to live within their earning power. Due to the lack of housing, workers are commuting from other Phoenix areas, which takes up valuable time and requires costly gas mileage. This combination dilutes their buying power and sends them to work in more profitable areas. Ultimately, the cost of living in Fountain Hills adversely affects the sustainability of our local businesses.

People want to live where they work, especially in Fountain Hills, because it offers so much to its residents. To help remedy this problem, developers, home builders, the Chamber, realtors and the Town and Town Council need to work together to provide incentives for commuters or alternate ideas for commuting. Also, our town needs to add more diverse housing that fits within the community and offers reasonable rents for younger wage earners, our emergency responders, our service workers, our teachers, and our seniors on a strict budget. Sustainable diverse housing that fits within our zoning parameters and town dynamics will contribute to our economic vitality and help our local businesses thrive.

**GAYLE EARLE:** This is not unique to Fountain Hills. The workforce issues are happening at County, State and Nationwide levels. The shortages are significantly in the restaurant and medical industries. As a small business owner, I am familiar with what it takes to recruit, train, and keep good employees as well as hiring good quality sub-contractors.

Fountain Hills has diverse housing options and we are surrounded by major cities. Employees will travel and/or move for jobs that they enjoy and where they are treated well. Consequently, it is also up to businesses to attract and keep good employees. Fountain Hills is a beautiful and safe community for employees and businesses. As a councilmember, I will ensure that we keep Fountain Hills an attractive place to live, work, and play. Finally, I would like to hear from the stakeholders, the Chamber, and Economic Development with recommendations for mutually beneficial solutions on this issue.

**JOE ARPAIO:** High rents and home prices are a challenge for working-class people in almost every town in America, especially affluent towns like Fountain Hills. New housing is being built for working-class people to address this issue and additional housing should be built in the future as needed.

**CLAYTON COREY:** The high cost of living in our town is creating significant workforce issues, especially for those in the service industry who find it increasingly difficult to afford to live where they work. This imbalance not only impacts individual workers and their families but also our local businesses and the overall health of our economy. To address these challenges, I will focus on initiatives aimed at increasing affordable housing options within Fountain Hills. We need to develop more mixed-use and multi-family housing units that are financially accessible to service industry workers. This approach will help in retaining our existing workforce and attracting new workers, which is essential for the sustainability of our local businesses. Additionally, I plan to work with community leaders to explore transportation solutions that can alleviate some of the transportation challenges so that we can make commuting more feasible for those who might live outside our town but work in Fountain Hills. Through these strategies, I am committed to creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all workers, ensuring that Fountain Hills remains a thriving and vibrant community.

## BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE - QUESTION 5



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**ART  
TOLIS**

Per the Town of Fountain Hills rules and procedures, town council members agree to the following "RECOGNIZE THAT THE CHIEF FUNCTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS AT ALL TIMES TO SERVE THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE." In order to achieve this, what resources would you rely on to confidently make decisions that represent the best interests of all people?

### ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER

**GAYLE EARLE:** According to MAG our Build out is 26,100 by 2060. According to the Town Manager, our build out is 35,000. Nobody seems to know the precise answer to this question. So, first of all we need to get the accurate maximum population for our town. Once we have this true number the General Plan and Strategic Plan can be very specific with their projections. I support increasing the population within the actual build out projection. I also advocate for development that preserves our unique small-town beauty and charm. Ask just about anyone who lives in Fountain Hills and "small-town feel" and "wide open spaces" are probably the two top reasons why people live and invest in Fountain Hills. In addition to the current homes and apartments being built, the school district has three properties that could be sold and zoned for single family homes. The State Trust land could be built out too. One of the issues has been, who would pay for the utilities that need to be bought into this area. One option is to make it a "Community Facilities District" the same as Eagle Mountain. Regardless, these are all perceived as significant changes to our Town and should not be made without considerable input from our residents in an open and transparent manner.

**ART TOLIS:** My vision for Fountain Hills is to grow responsibly to a maximum of 35,000 residents over the next decade. We should focus on completing downtown with additional apartments and commercial spaces, including restaurants and amenities, to attract local dining and shopping. Key development areas include the Target Plaza and downtown. Collaborating with Fort McDowell will also boost community investment. As a resident and investor in multiple businesses, I am committed to our community's future. I'm actively working on strategic initiatives, such as converting a commercial building to residential use near Fountain Park. This investment reflects my dedication to our long-term growth plans.

**JOE ARPAIO:** Anything that doesn't grow, dies. Our age demographic and housing prices make it a reality that we can only grow so much. We currently have minor population growth and see more opportunities to make Fountain Hills a vibrant town for winter visitors & citizens. Also, we need more babies who will live and grow in the community. As the families grow, these families will have children, and hopefully will continue to live in beautiful Fountain Hills.

**COUNCILMEMBER GERRY FRIEDEL:** My vision for our town's population is a definite need for growth which will help our sustainably. We need more heads in the beds as they say. We need more residents in our community to feed our schools, sales tax revenue, and buy our homes. We have a couple of additional housing opportunities available to us. One is the State Trust Land north of town. The additional housing estimated at approximately 1500 homes would certainly help. This could be master planned for more entry level housing, or a mix. The second option could be for some of the parcels of vacant school owned properties. There could be several different options available for entry level housing there as well. Bringing in a mix of new residents could very well bring in more vitality, businesses, and students for our school district, a win win win for our town.

**CLAYTON COREY:** I definitely see growth as a positive direction for our town. Over the next decade, I envision our population expanding beyond the current level of around 24,000. This growth is essential not only for the vibrancy of our community but also for enhancing our local economy and increasing our cultural diversity. To responsibly manage this growth, I will advocate for the development of mixed-use housing and new community facilities that meet the needs of a diverse population. My plan includes attracting young families and professionals by improving infrastructure, like enhancing internet connectivity and public transportation, which are essential for modern living and working. I also see a tremendous opportunity to develop green spaces and recreational facilities that make Fountain Hills even more attractive to potential residents. By pursuing these strategies, we can ensure that our town grows in a balanced and sustainable way, making it an even better place to live, work, and play.

**RICK WATTS:** Fountain Hills is landlocked and has a limited number of lots and land prices and topography make housing costs significantly higher than the average cost of housing of many surrounding locales in the Phoenix metro area. Facts that we simply need to accept. I would like to explore opportunities to expand Fountain Hills without compromising the beauty and charm of our small town. Fountain Hills was planned as an upscale family centric community as are numerous other cities and town across the state and country. We should be proud of our town and its many unique benefits, features and opportunities. I believe that everyone that aspires to live in Fountain Hills should be able to find and purchase their dream the home within the current limitations of the town physical boundaries and the ability of our infrastructure to support the quality of life we all enjoy. We should encourage and support our schools and businesses to grow by helping to innovate, support and advertise excellence in education and service.

## Continued...ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER - QUESTION 5

**ROBERT WALLACE:** I'm all for seeing our town's population hit what I think is a sweet spot, between 30k and 35k over the next decade. Since I think that's where we can really thrive as a community. Now, don't get me wrong – I'm not looking to turn us into some sprawling metropolis. But I do think a bit of growth is a good thing. It means more opportunities for businesses to thrive, more resources for our schools and infrastructure, and just a generally more vibrant, dynamic community to be a part of. But it's not just about the numbers – it's about making sure that growth is smart and sustainable. That means investing in things like transportation, housing, and green spaces to keep our town livable and lovable for years to come. So yeah, count me in for seeing our population grow a bit over the next decade. But let's do it in a way that keeps Fountain Hills the amazing place that it is.

**COUNCILMEMBER PEGGY MCMAHON:** Presently, the Town's population is at about 24,000 and that number hasn't grown much in the last decade. The lack of growth affects our diversity and economic vitality and the future of our town. We live in a beautiful and vibrant town that many people are attracted to and desire to live here. Fortunately, Fountain Hills has natural boundaries to keep our population from growing out of proportion with its environment. We wish to keep our natural resources, land use and infrastructure, our iconic views and unique small home town feel. Because of these reasons, and more, many residents may not favor an increase in population. However, the town cannot afford to be stagnant and not open for business. Without smart growth, our housing values will decrease, businesses will be lost, and the town will be unable to replace aging infrastructure or offer needed community services. Ultimately, these losses will adversely affect the overall health and welfare of our community, making it less desirable and attractive to live, work and play in Fountain Hills. Our community is too involved to let that happen. Most agree that sustainability requires, at a minimum, moderate future growth that will contribute to our economic vitality and attract new businesses, create job opportunities and keep our property values high. Being open to careful and reasonable growth that will capitalize on our 59 age demographic opportunities and make room for middle age adults, young families with children, young entrepreneurs and professionals that will add to sustainable business development, prosperity and the overall well-being of our community. Moderate growth that fits well within our natural boundaries, maintains our iconic views and keeps our small town feel while contributing to and providing for a brighter more sustainable future.

**MATHEW CORRIGAN:** The question of the town's population over the next ten years is an interesting but limited question. As a town, we still have vacant lots downtown for future development. We are also limited in growth by our neighboring boundaries of Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, McDowell mountains, Scottsdale and Salt River. The State Trust land is also a possible avenue for growth of smaller entry level single family houses, condos and apartments. The challenges in this would be finding a developer with the ability to finance such a project. This has been attempted in the past and did not work out successfully. I do believe it is important to maintain the general plan of the original Fountain Hills development model. Phoenix magazine named Fountain Hills as the best place to live in the valley and named us "a welcome oasis on the outskirts of a metropolis." Many of us have made the decision to make Fountain Hills our final dream home. Many of us worked hard and made many sacrifices in order to be able to live here. It is important that we maintain this gem of the desert as home. Or as Phoenix magazine said, "A welcome oasis on the outskirts of a metropolis."

**MAYOR GINNY DICKEY:** I believe our immediate population future is somewhat, and unfortunately, static. It is controlled in part by the availability of housing: much of our vacant property is privately owned and of infill in nature coupled with a recent local perception that rental and multifamily properties are unacceptable solutions to housing shortages. In earlier times, we were in a "building mode" with many single-family homes being constructed annually plus investments in a variety of residential and commercial developments throughout the community. (These were a significant source of revenue for the Town.) Today, both Park Place and the Village at Four Peaks/Target Center projects are stalled for different reasons. The Town has successfully rezoned several commercial areas into mixed-use, and a number of smaller but helpful multi-family units have come online in recent years. Others have expanded or remodeled, again helpful. My hope is to overcome the broad-brush negativity associated with growth. Always one to preserve views and neighborhood integrity, I have long recognized, though, there is indeed a need for careful "smart" development, as without more competitive housing and zoning changes for different levels of commercial use, we may not progress. An opportunity exists with the State Trust land north of Town if an investor overcomes the physical obstacles and associated costs. There have been some changes in the original maps, but there could be homes, a resort or other uses that could attract population. This question is related to the one below regarding local jobs that may employ people who can't afford to live here. Another way to tackle that is to look at Honor Health and the FHMC, for example, and the rise in working from home as helping higher earners choose to locate in Fountain Hills... though inventory remains a challenge. I don't know what number we ultimately land on, but 30K seems attainable, a good balance. Last, I will always advocate for a welcoming, reasonable, kind hometown that is inviting, safe and beautiful.

**HENRY MALE:** Like many communities in the country, we've enjoyed healthy increases in our home values over the past 20+ years, but the downside of these property value increases is that our housing market is out of reach for most young or median families. To open the playing field for more families, the high density housing we already have begun developing (FH Blvd, Target) helps. Economically we need a broader base to support our financial needs through sales tax. Without a PPT while holding steady in population growth the only way to afford larger programs would be with bonds and other similar programs. This is a course of action that has proven undesirable by the town. Widening our population base will increase the dollars spent locally, which in turns increases the amount of sales tax for the town to use for budgetary needs.

## BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE - QUESTION 6



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**CLAYTON  
COREY**

What do you think should be done with the empty commercial space in our town? Do you have plans, as a council member, to address this issue?

### ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER

**HENRY MALE:** The good news is that the number of empty storefronts in downtown has been reduced over the past two years (after COVID). We need to support the continuing efforts of the economic development plan. Perhaps engage with property owners to see if they are being adamant about pricing. Are they holding firm to a rental price point that would be supported if the commercial spaces were full, therefore passing on a lower level income of rent while waiting for that full price? Re there other uses for that commercial space that would prove beneficial to the community? As for vacant windows and store fronts, perhaps a beautification program can be created with artwork provided by local artists or students in our schools' art programs.

**GAYLE EARLE:** First of all, we need to find out why the commercial space is empty. We need to work with Economic Development and the Chamber to find out if we should be doing something different. Is the problem zoning, infrastructure, parking, marketing, commercial property owners, or something else? What ideas haven't been tried yet? What ideas have been tried but have failed? Fountain Hills is a beautiful town, steps from major cities and several airports. Certainly, we should be able to attract new employers. I advocate working with stakeholders to work towards new solutions for this issue.

**ART TOLIS:** As a councilmember (if elected), I believe empty commercial spaces that are no longer suited for commercial use should be converted to residential. I am personally taking the initiative by investing in a local commercial building and planning to convert it to residential. Planning and zoning, along with the Town Council, should identify such areas and encourage local investment. Mixed-use development is beneficial, preserving the community's character while providing more housing options. Given that current housing prices average over \$600,000, converting some commercial to residential and offering rentals within the \$1800-\$2500 range ensures that professionals can still afford to live and thrive in Fountain Hills. The down payments for young professionals to purchase homes locally is a major hurdle for most just starting out in their professions.

**JOE ARPAIO:** The marketplace and its demographics are at the core of unoccupied commercial space. We have a large part of our population that are seasonal. Empty houses can't support businesses all year long. Projects like the Dark Sky Museum and The Fountain draw tourists, and working with Fort McDowell Casino can at least help create more commercial opportunities.

**COUNCILMEMBER GERRY FRIEDEL:** Empty commercial space in town has been talked about for many years. There are several things we should consider exploring I think. Perhaps consider contacting the owners to see if they are actively marketing and looking for tenants for the property. Can the town do something with our zoning ordinances to help them find tenants? We should always be reviewing our zoning regulations to see if we are current. If it is a large enough commercial property or space can we explore a special district to help with development? Yes, we would probably need help from the state but we have a State Senator who lives here and has already shown us a willingness to get involved to help our town by example of the IDSDC. I'd like to form an EDAC commission Economic Development Advisory Commission to help address these concerns.

**CLAYTON COREY:** I'm going to refer to our strategic plans here, which my priorities are in line with. The General Plan highlights the need to support mixed-use districts and address excess commercial zoning, which aligns with efforts to increase residential land uses and support redevelopment. It emphasizes the importance of transforming vacant commercial areas into vibrant, mixed-use spaces that contribute to the town's vitality and appeal. Similarly, the Strategic Plan underlines targeted collaborative economic development, aiming to enhance our towns appeal as a vibrant community by supporting economic stability and growth. So this would involve forming partnerships with stakeholders to foster the local expansion of business and tourism opportunities, which includes revitalizing underutilized commercial areas. As a council member, I will advocate for these plans, focusing on converting empty commercial spaces into mixed-use developments that attract new businesses and residents, thereby revitalizing our town and boosting the local economy. This approach will help to address the vacancies while enhancing the overall functionality and aesthetic of our community areas.

**RICK WATTS:** Our town economic development department should interview and consolidate the reasons experienced by the various landlords to first determine why the properties are not leased. Second the data should be reviewed to determine if there is a common theme and if so a solution should be crafted by and coordinated with the help of the town council. We need to understand the reasoning and then help with the solution. As a prior business owner i have an understanding of the various functions and would be glad to assist such an endeavor to help landlords determine options and possible solutions. As with many issues, we often cannot see the tress for the forest but from a distance we can see the opportunities that are right in front of us.



## Continued...ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER - QUESTION 6

**MAYOR GINNY DICKEY:** As indicated by a series of reports, the percentages of overall commercial vacancies are not out of line with trends in other cities and towns. The popularity of working from home and the almost unbelievable growth in the use of online shopping and other methods of providing the goods consumers want has made brick and mortar retail suffer. Even medical and vet care is somewhat being delivered through virtual methods. It's not right or wrong, but a reality that planners, economic developers, investors and entrepreneurs must adjust to in order to succeed.

With no property taxes, the Town has limited tools to incentivize investments. There is a place for expedited permitting and perhaps sales tax deferral, but these steps must be taken very carefully to ensure fair treatment to all.

We will continue to seize opportunities to repurpose commercial space in a way that does not affect surrounding businesses or residents negatively. It can be done if everyone is willing to consider creative options and to compromise on solutions that can meet several objectives.

As identified in the voter-approved General Plan... and the Strategic Plan that acts as an implementation guide... we can continue to support creative development investments and commercial rezoning that offer mixed-use, single and multi-family purchase and rental options while preserving our unique character. They are not mutually exclusive. There is room for all to live in neighborhoods that suit them.

**ROBERT WALLACE:** It's no secret that we've got some empty lots and empty commercial space, and they're definitely not doing our community any favors like the one at the end of E. Ave of the Fountain that needs to be developed.

What I'm thinking is first off, we need to figure out why these spaces are empty in the first place. Are rents too high? Is there just not enough foot traffic in certain areas? Once we understand the root causes, we can start to come up with solutions.

One idea I've been thinking about is to incentivize businesses to move into these empty spaces. Maybe we offer tax breaks or other incentives to businesses that are willing to take a chance on Fountain Hills. Or maybe we work with property owners to offer flexible leasing terms to make it easier for businesses to get started.

We also might try to get creative with how we use these spaces. Maybe we turn some of them into co-working spaces or pop-up shops to give entrepreneurs a low-risk way to test out their ideas. Or maybe we partner with local artists and creatives to turn empty storefronts into temporary art galleries higher end retailers, restaurants or performance spaces.

And of course, we need to make sure we're marketing our town effectively to attract both businesses and customers. That means promoting our unique vibe and all the amazing things that Fountain Hills has to offer.

**COUNCILMEMBER PEGGY MCMAHON:** Covid affected how we socialized, shopped and visited restaurants and used commercial centers during the pandemic. As a result, many commercial shopping centers are now empty, remain unused and can be considered blights that detract from the town and its economic vitality. Fountain Hills has a few major empty commercial properties that detract from our town.

"Embarrassing" is one word I've heard numerous times. "Why isn't the town doing anything about this blight?" These comments are mostly directed toward the empty Target Center, but also the empty lots and buildings in our downtown area. Our zoning ordinances govern use of these parcels of land, which are zoned for commercial use. The town respects these zoning ordinances and changes are not taken lightly. Many community members dislike it when zoning changes or special use permits are issued by council, which appears to be one reason council hesitates to make zoning changes.

However, our State Legislature recently recognized the commercial blight and housing problems that exist throughout the valley. They recently passed legislation making it easier for towns to rezone certain commercial lots to mixed use zoning-- authorizing conversion of empty buildings into new developments to meet community housing needs. Apartments in town are currently at maximum capacity and rentals are difficult to find, creating a workforce and housing problem. These problems can be addressed with smart and moderate growth. Growth involves renovating and revitalizing our empty commercial buildings into smart housing developments as well as allowing existing downtown commercial buildings to build second floor rental units. Both of these measures would decrease the blight and simultaneously, provide needed housing. These potential new developments can provide reasonable rents that will attract young professionals, families, emergency responders, college students and seniors on a strict budget, who will add to our community. Local businesses would also benefit because their employees will be able to live near their jobs, making them more reliable and able to live, work and play in the town that they love. We are a beautiful town that is innovative enough to utilize our empty shopping centers and commercial lots with smart measured growth, building a stronger community with a more vibrant and sustainable future.

**MATHEW CORRIGAN:** To the question of "What do you think should be done with the empty commercial space in our town?"

I am assuming that by "empty commercial space", the question might be about the empty commercial retail space in the downtown area. Certainly, in this post pandemic economy, we have our share of the state and national problem of higher vacancy rates in retail areas.

I am hopeful that the planned future home of the International Dark Sky Discovery Center will bring new vitality to our downtown retail businesses. I attended the ground breaking event and this new venture is certainly an exciting project for Fountain Hills future development.

As to my vision for the new center, I would be very interested in a focused key strategy to meet with key decision makers in higher education (Astronomy?), light industry, research or other developing technologies to bring their enterprises here to Fountain Hills. This also brings with it higher income employees who would live here and support our beautiful town.

# BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE RESPONSE - QUESTION 7



In your opinion, what role should the town council play in balancing the needs of businesses with those of residents and ensuring that ordinances reflect the interests of both parties?

**JOE ARPAIO**

**ART  
TOLIS**

## ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER

**MAYOR GINNY DICKEY:** The Town staff and Council should maintain a healthy, open relationship with the business community while respecting those who (maybe decades ago) chose Fountain Hills as their home. The Town is working with businesses to identify opportunities for tourism, growth and vitality, putting resources toward and employing full-time economic development staff. Their role is to best meet current local needs, recruiting new businesses through many channels including membership in regional organizations dedicated to the economic success of the Valley and State, and providing professional direction and guidance when it comes to Town/business relationships and requirements.

It remains important to recognize that business growth and success go hand in hand with our residential population. Balancing quality of life with business is very important to those who live here.

There are competing forces to reconcile: Short term rentals and group homes are businesses, yet their existence affects neighborhoods in a way that could discourage new residents. Lack of services, retail and entertainment opportunities could also discourage new residents. Too many temporary signs are not aesthetically pleasing, but difficulty locating and being able to patronize a business is not good, either.

The Council must consider decisions holistically by looking at each rezone, permitting or ordinance change, development agreement, etc. individually on its merits and effect on the community. No question, it would be positive and helpful if both resident and business interests would recognize that and be willing to consider compromise solutions.

There is doubtless a need for balance, as there is for just about every aspect of public service.

**ROBERT WALLACE:** When it comes to balancing the needs of businesses and residents, the town council plays a crucial role in ensuring that ordinances and policies reflect the interests of both parties. Here's how I see it:

First and foremost, the town council needs to be a bridge between businesses and residents. That means listening to both sides, understanding their concerns, and finding common ground.

One way to do that is by cultivating open dialogue and collaboration. We need to make sure that businesses and residents have a seat at the table when it comes to decision-making, whether that's through town council meetings, or other forums where we get community input.

At the same time, the town council needs to be proactive in addressing the needs of both businesses and residents. That means staying ahead of issues before they become problems, whether that's by updating outdated ordinances, streamlining regulations, or investing in infrastructure that benefits everyone.

And of course, transparency is key as some feel like that might be lacking currently. We need to make sure that everyone understands the reasoning behind the decisions we make and how they'll impact both businesses and residents.

As a council member, I'd be committed to finding that balance between the needs of businesses and residents. Because at the end of the day, we're all in this together, and by working together, we can build a stronger, more vibrant community for everyone.

**COUNCILMEMBER PEGGY MCMAHON:** The Town Council represents our community as a whole, which includes local business interests. One of its responsibilities is to update and revise ordinances that keep up with the town's changing needs and growth. It is the Town Council's job to address the needs of our local businesses and residents when considering ordinance changes to ensure they reflect, as best they can, the overall interests of the community. Our local businesses and our community are very involved in our town governance. They often have competing interests and different visions about our governing ordinances and the impact they will have on the future of our town. To help balance these competing interests, Town Council has enacted commissions, like the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Strategic Planning Advisory Commission, to make recommendations to staff and the council about town ordinance matters that will affect businesses and residents.

Accordingly, when an ordinance change comes before Town Council, Councilmembers have many factors to consider before agreeing to any ordinance changes or updates. They must consider recommendations provided by council-appointed commissions, talk with staff, check with the town attorney, and consider business and residents' input and public comments. They also must consider the type of ordinance variation requested, its purpose, the need for it, the enforceability and overall effect it will have on residents, businesses and the town as a whole. Balancing all of these competing interests with the needs of our businesses and community, while taking into account the reason for and outcome of an ordinance, is the role of the Council as the governing body of Fountain Hills. No matter what the outcome, not everyone will agree with the council's decision. However, it's their job to make difficult and impartial decisions in order to enact and revise ordinances that will represent the best interests of our business community and our community as a whole.

**MATHEW CORRIGAN:** The Town Council is a final decision maker in determining the maintaining, amending or rezoning ordinances for the Town of Fountain Hills. The Planning and Zoning Commission does a great deal of research, careful thought and final deliberation on the planning and zoning issues brought before it. Most of these decisions are based on maintaining the standards of our ordinances.

The Town Council has a responsibility and obligation to do the same due diligence in regard to our ordinances. I resolve to uphold this responsibility and obligation if elected to the Fountain Hills Town Council.

It is essential that all available information be thoroughly evaluated before making a decision.

The answer to this question should and will always be the same answer should I be elected to the Town Council.

"My decisions and actions will be guided by the best interests of the community we serve."

## Continued...ALL CANDIDATE RESPONSES IN RANDOM ORDER - QUESTION 7

**HENRY MALE:** We all want an attractive, comfortable, and safe town in which we reside and do business. Ordinances can support these shared goals (what about sign ordinances?) and continuing to hold forums about more contentious issues gives everyone a chance to be heard. Regardless of the specific needs, there will be times when the residents' needs will supersede those of businesses and vice versa. We need to ensure that the delicate balance addressing those needs is always weighed and considered. In a perfect world, the town council would have little or no interaction as the marketplace would organically sort itself out. Unfortunately, we don't live in a perfect world, but it is a pretty darn good world and a strong caring, listening council considering all aspects of an issue will find the right collaborative solution to a problem that would best for all.

**RICK WATTS:** As is the theme of my campaign, Objective listening is paramount to finding equitable and reasonable solutions. Listening with the intent to understand and issue, abandoning preconceived notions and genuinely listening trying to understand the impact of a situation and then discussing potential solutions. Takes time and desire to achieve a common ground to be able to minimally adjust as necessary as the town and situations progress.

**GERRY FRIEDEL:** The role of the town council is extremely important I believe when it comes to businesses in our town. We must see that every business has the opportunity to be successful and be able to offer services that every resident wants, needs, and expects in their town. Otherwise they will go where they can get these services, and we lose big time. We lose sales tax revenue, we lose the business, and we lose the jobs! And maybe we also lose potential residents and children for our schools. The role of the town council is extremely important and very underrated I believe when you consider all the moving parts that just the business community provides a community. I believe that at some point a training session for new council members on this subject and the far reaching implications on our community would be worthwhile.

**JOE ARPAIO:** The needs/desires of residents and of businesses go hand in hand, it's not one against the other. If residents want certain businesses, they have to support them and support the tourism it takes so they can succeed. More thriving Fountain Hills businesses means more residents' needs/desires being satisfied. We also must support the Chamber of Commerce in their ongoing efforts to attract business since we are competing for those dollars with other communities.

**CLAYTON COREY:** In my view, the town council should play a crucial role in balancing the needs of businesses with those of residents by acting as a mediator and facilitator. This involves creating and enforcing ordinances that reflect a fair compromise, supporting the interests and growth of both parties. As a future member of the Fountain Hills Town Council, I will advocate for regular dialogue and collaboration between business leaders and community members. This communication will help us understand the unique challenges and opportunities each group faces.

Additionally, I will push for the development of plans and strategies that include input from all stakeholders, including the chamber. The plans should address key areas such as zoning, local economic development, environmental protection, and community services. By crafting thoughtful ordinances that consider economic vitality alongside residents' quality of life, we can ensure sustainable growth that benefits everyone.

I believe the town council and P&Z should be proactive in keeping ordinances up-to-date with changing economic landscapes and community needs. This may involve periodic reviews of existing laws and regulations to ensure they remain relevant and effective. Through these actions, the town council can ensure a harmonious balance that fosters a thriving, inclusive community in Fountain Hills.

**ART TOLIS:** Balancing the needs of businesses and residents is crucial for our town council. Businesses contribute to our financial success driving sales tax revenues, with high-ticket items like car sales bolstering sales tax revenues. (I was an advocate for the successful passing of indoor car sales as a council member) Residents want us to prioritize infrastructure and property value protection which requires growth of our income base. Supporting local businesses and strategic growth, particularly in downtown and business districts like Shea Boulevard, is key to our long term success. We must uphold noise ordinances and commonsense regulations to maintain quality of life for all residents. Each case requires careful consideration to strike the right balance. With the sales tax and state shared revenues two major components to our income model as a town, business growth and investment must be prioritized.

**GAYLE EARLE:** Regarding ordinances, we should take into serious consideration the original plan for our town. We should be very careful when deciding whether to change any zoning ordinance that will affect our residents. Zoning ordinances are promises to residences and businesses. People buy and invest in their property based on zoning that surrounds them. If the Town wishes to make a significant zoning change or even grant exceptions, the decision should be well-thought out and certainly not rushed. For example, when there is a request to change a zoning ordinance near a resident's property that would lower the property's value and the resident's investment and quality of life, the input of the resident must be fully evaluated and respected before any decision is made. All ordinance or zoning changes should be appropriate, respectful, and keeping with the original plan of our Town which was designed for open spaces and desert views.

2024

## Interview Process



# LEGISLATIVE REPORT



**As part of this process, all election candidates participated in board interviews. During these brief interviews, candidates were given time to introduce themselves, address two questions and respond to any clarifying questions from the board. Candidate presentations were recorded to ensure that board members who could not attend in person could still participate.**

**Directors scored the candidates immediately after their presentations. The mayoral and town council candidates who received the most favorable responses are identified in the following pages.**

# OVERALL MOST FAVORABLE IN BOARD INTERVIEWS

**MAYORAL**



**GINNY DICKEY**

**TOWN  
COUNCIL**



**ART TOLIS**

# BOTH MAYORAL AND COUNCIL CANDIDATE MOST FAVORABLE IN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & OVERALL CANDIDATE ELEMENTS.

IF YOU HAVE TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT TO THE TOWN COUNCIL, P&Z OR FHUSD SCHOOL BOARD, COULD YOU SHARE WHAT YOU ADVOCATED FOR AND PROVIDE AN EXPLANATION? IF NOT, WHAT WOULD YOU ADVOCATE FOR TODAY? OR FOR INCUMBENTS: CAN YOU SHARE EXAMPLES OF YOUR VOTING RECORD THAT DEMONSTRATES YOUR APPROACH TOWARD OUR BUSINESS COMMUNITY?

AND

AS A TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER, WHAT EXPECTATIONS DO YOU HAVE OF YOUR FOUNTAIN HILLS CHAMBER AS IT RELATES TO OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TOWN OF FH?

THE OVERALL CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT CONSIDERED VARIOUS KEY ATTRIBUTES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO EXCELLENCE. THESE ATTRIBUTES INCLUDED A SPIRIT OF COLLABORATION, INNOVATION, AND THE ABILITY TO ARTICULATE IDEAS CLEARLY. IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING STRONG ANSWERS, CANDIDATES WERE EVALUATED ON THEIR HUMILITY, HONESTY, TRANSPARENCY AND THE VALUE THEY PLACED ON THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHAMBER AND ITS MEMBERS.

**MAYORAL**



**GINNY DICKEY**

**MAYORAL**



**GINNY DICKEY**

**TOWN COUNCIL**



**ART TOLIS**

**TOWN COUNCIL**



**ART TOLIS**

2024

Overall Grading Process



**LEGISLATIVE  
REPORT**

The overall grades represent the collective input of the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and were determined based on three components:

1. Board interviews scores (17.5%)
2. Candidate element scores (17.5%)
3. Blind survey scores (65%)

These components were weighted according to their respective priorities.

A linear transformation curve was then used to calculate the final grades for each candidate based on their weighted scores.



# 2024 OVERALL CANDIDATE GRADING

## MAYORAL CANDIDATES



**GINNY  
DICKEY**



**GERRY  
FRIEDEL**



**JOE  
ARPAIO**





# 2024 OVERALL CANDIDATE GRADING

## TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATES



**ART  
TOLIS**



**CLAYTON  
COREY**



**PEGGY  
MCMAHON**



**HENRY  
MALE**







# 2024 OVERALL CANDIDATE GRADING

## TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATES



**RICK  
WATTS**



**ROBERT  
WALLACE**



**MATHEW  
CORRIGAN**



**GAYLE  
EARLE**





# 2024



# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

**As a nonprofit in Fountain Hills, the Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors who are strong advocates for our community and town stakeholders. Our board consists of business owners, entrepreneurs, nonprofit leaders, and volunteers from our community, making them excellent representatives for the business and nonprofit sectors. We are grateful for the time, dedication, and service our directors have demonstrated during the candidate support process to create the legislative report.**

**Additionally, thank you to all the candidates running for office for participating in this process and for contributing your time, energy, and skills for the good of our community.**

**THANK YOU**