

Jamestown residents will choose one person to represent them as Jamestown mayor for the next four years in the primary election on June 9.

The Jamestown mayor is paid \$19,200 annually. The city of Jamestown also pays workers' compensation, Social Security and Medicare on the wages.

Patrick Davis, Dwaine Heinrich and Katie Hemmer are seeking the Jamestown mayoral seat.

Heinrich currently holds the seat.

Hemmer served as mayor from 2010–2018.

Davis is seeking his first term.

The candidates were asked 10 written questions and were asked to provide biographical information. Their written answers were limited to 175 words for each question and were not changed or edited.

Patrick Davis

Employment/Occupation (former if retired): semi-retired from the trucking industry

Education: Graduated from Hellgate High School in Missoula, Montana, in 1984; completed an A.S.S. in Diesel Technology from the University of Montana in 1994.

Immediate Family: wife, Chris; three sons, Nick, Ryan and PJ; 10 grandchildren.

Up to 5 memberships/organizations of which you are a member: (none provided)

Dwaine Heinrich

Employment/Occupation (former if retired): Founder of Heinrich and Company Insurance Adjusters. Currently serving as a consultant.

Education: bachelor's degree, Southwest Minnesota State University

Immediate Family: wife, Joyce; one stepson; three grandchildren

Up to 5 memberships/organizations of which you are a member: president of North Dakota League of Cities, Jamestown Lions Club, Jamestown Elks Lodge, Veteran of Foreign Wars, St. James Basilica Parish

Katie Hemmer

Employment/Occupation (former if retired): airport director, Jamestown Regional Airport

Education: Bachelor of Science, Political Science, South Dakota State University

Immediate Family: son, Camron, sophomore at North Dakota State University; daughter, Keira, eighth grader at Jamestown Middle School.

Up to 5 memberships/organizations of which you are a member: musician, St. James Basilica Parish; Jamestown Country Club Board of Directors; North Dakota High School Activities Association gymnastics official, American Association of Airport Executives

1. Why should voters choose you for Jamestown mayor?

Patrick Davis: It's time for a change in leadership. There are things that should have been addressed 20 years ago that are now getting attention, housing and infrastructure.

Dwaine Heinrich: I have been involved with many organizations within the Jamestown community for many years. I have a history of successfully working with others with a "community as a whole" approach to issues. I am just finishing 8 successful years as a Mayor and wish to continue working for the people of Jamestown.

Katie Hemmer: Jamestown needs leadership that is willing to build for the future. Every community faces the same reality: grow and thrive, or fall behind. We have the opportunity to create new jobs, raise household incomes, expand housing, reduce property taxes, and bring more retail, restaurant, recreation, and entertainment opportunities to our city. None of

this happens by accident. Progress requires vision, energy, and the courage to aim higher. Right now, our city government is not aiming at much of anything. I've always believed, "If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time." Jamestown deserves leadership with vision for the future. Leadership that brings people together around clear goals and pursues policies that directly improve the lives of our citizens. I will bring the energetic, visionary leadership we need. Jamestown is a great community with a proud history rooted in rural values. We can continue to celebrate our strengths as a smaller city while planning for thoughtful growth and meaningful improvement. With courageous leadership, we can build a better future for Jamestown.

2. What are your top two priorities for the city of Jamestown? Explain.

Davis: Housing and infrastructure. As everyone knows there is a shortage of housing and a failing infrastructure and it's from a lack of attention for the needs of the community.

Heinrich: We have to look at the city as a business and for any business to be successful and survive it must be financially stable. Therefore, maintaining the financial stability we have created over the past 8 years must continue to be a top priority. The city and the county through the JSDC has done a good job with economic development and we expect that to continue. Now we must continue to keep our focus on housing and daycare to meet the need that has been and will continue to be created by the economic development of our community.

Hemmer: My top two priorities are grow and diversify the economy and reduce the property tax burden on residents. Jamestown needs businesses to locate, expand, and invest here to strengthen our economy. Businesses cannot grow without workforce, and workforce cannot move here without available housing. We must address the housing shortage. Our population has been stagnant to declining for the last eight years. We cannot maintain — or improve — the quality of life we want without attracting and retaining working families, young professionals, and skilled employees. When I served as Mayor, we reversed years of population decline and achieved Jamestown's highest population levels since 1980. During that same period, I reduced the city mill levy rate — the multiplier used to calculate property taxes — to its lowest level since 1986. It is possible to grow the economy and reduce the property tax burden. It happens when government welcomes growth and development, then works cooperatively with the business community to seize new opportunities—from infrastructure below ground to housing and business establishing above ground.

3. What if anything can be done to improve snow removal in the city? Explain.

Davis: Snow removal is difficult at best no matter how its accomplished no one is happy, having 2 years of snow removal experience while in the Air Force, Jamestown has for the most part a decent plan of removal, with a 4-inch accumulation policy, which is commonly the standard, for removal operations to start immediately, manpower is an issue, either not enough or lack of experience.

Heinrich: Now, here in Jamestown we have been fortunate the last few years because we've had very little snowfall with the exception of isolated storms or snow events over the winter of any consequence. My experience has been that I receive more compliments regarding the snow removal operations of the city than I do complaints. However, we are always open to suggestions. Here in Jamestown we have 433 lane miles of streets and roads to be cleared. That would be equivalent to clearing a one way road from Jamestown to Regina, Saskatchewan only with a lot more starts and stops. Hopefully the mild winters will continue but I believe we are prepared should we have a return to more normal winters.

Hemmer: Snow removal is just one example of a City service that can benefit from a culture shift toward a "can-do" attitude. It starts at the top and can be instilled throughout city government. A service-minded approach doesn't cost the taxpayer a penny, but it can make a tremendous difference. We also need to implement efficiency improvements across all departments. Conducting workflow and workload analyses will help identify inefficiencies in current staffing models and lead to more data-driven decisions about our workforce needs. As we continue implementing new technology, we can improve service delivery, increase efficiency, and reduce long-term personnel demands without increasing the budget. Snow removal is also a great example of how communication and transparency can dramatically improve public service. One of the biggest frustrations residents face during snow events is not knowing when plows will reach their street or when travel routes will be cleared. Using GPS tracking and real-time communication tools can help residents understand the plan, see where crews are working, and know what to expect.

4. Can more be done to fully develop the area near Menards? Explain.

Davis: Absolutely more can be done! We have to have a development plan for housing and some business lots.

Heinrich: What is going on around the Menards area I believe is typical of what happens when a large operation like Menards builds a facility in a remote area. There has been some development with the new Bison

Machinery operation and Les Schwab Tires. Keep in mind that the city agreed to Menards conditions at the time their facility was built which does at their request limits the types of businesses that can locate in that area. It certainly is an attractive area for the right business and I believe it will develop but it is going to take time. It is also hoped that residential development may occur south of that area and with the new Buffalo Manor housing complex going in west of Walmart this summer hopefully that will also help spur development.

Hemmer: The primary hindrance to development in the area around Menards is the lack of available workforce. When attracting the types of businesses that fit that corridor — hotels, fast food, stand-alone retail stores, and bar-and-grill style restaurants — site selectors look at several key factors tied directly to their business models: population, household median income, interstate traffic volume and visibility, and workforce availability. In many ways, Jamestown already checks several of those boxes. Our household median income is competitive, and the visibility and traffic along the interstate are attractive to many businesses. However, one challenge continues to hold us back: workforce availability. A business — especially a franchise operation — cannot risk poor customer service, reduced operating hours, or negative reviews caused by being unable to hire enough employees. If we want to welcome new business development to southwest Jamestown, we must grow our population. And population growth will not happen without a proactive investment in housing development. Housing is not just a residential issue — it is an economic development strategy.

5. The need for more housing continues. What can be done to spur more housing development.

Davis: Streamline the permitting process, help with special assessments and work with first time homebuyers' programs.

Heinrich: What has been in critical short supply in Jamestown has been residential lots on which individuals could build new homes. The reason for that shortage has been one primarily of costs. Putting in streets, roads, water and sewer is a very expensive undertaking and is the responsibility of the developer. We are going to have about 36 residential lots available for purchase at two locations, one on the north side of Jamestown and one on the south side of Jamestown in 2026 at a very attractive price. That price will be under \$50,000 and will come to the purchaser with zero special assessments. This has been a long and challenging effort that took a lot of hard work by a number of people. This will, I believe, eliminate the immediate need for lots for single family dwellings. There is also the need for upscale condominiums and other housing and that continues to be a work in

progress.

Hemmer: The City has the ability to bridge the gap between the cost of developing only a few lots at a time to meet immediate demand and the larger-scale development needed to meet future demand, while lowering per-lot infrastructure costs through economies of scale. We can utilize municipal financing tools to help, but we also need to streamline the development process itself. Development needs to happen quickly — both to address our urgent need for single-family housing and because investors and private developers need a process that is smooth, predictable, and efficient. We can accomplish a great deal in a short amount of time when all parties involved are working together. A developer should not have to navigate a multitude of separate meetings with different departments and entities to secure necessary approvals. We also need to be innovative in overcoming obstacles to development, whether that means addressing poor soil conditions, high groundwater, or other infrastructure challenges. The answer to the question, “Can this be done?” should always be: “Yes — and here is how we make it work.”

6. Are there ordinances that the city should consider updating or drafting to encourage more development in Jamestown? Explain.

Davis: I believe that there are, a review process must be added to update or refining ordinances.

Heinrich: There must be ordinances and building codes in place to have a well-planned community in which people would choose to live. I do not believe ordinances have been a factor in limiting development. If someone has a suggestion for a change that would be beneficial to the community as a whole there is no question but that the city would consider such a change. A good example of this is with the new Northeast Residential Development Project. Here the city agreed to allow a narrower street on a non-through culdesac street to save space and lower cost.

Hemmer: The primary ordinance related to development is Appendix B, which defines the requirements for subdivision development. We need language and standards in this ordinance that are right-sized for different types of development. Infrastructure needs vary depending on demand and usage. A road designed for residential traffic should not be built to the same standard as infrastructure serving highways or heavy industrial traffic. We need to balance a high standard for infrastructure requirements without creating overly burdensome standards that inhibit and deter private investment. We also need greater flexibility when planning infrastructure that can serve beyond a single development or subdivision. Creating shared infrastructure systems can generate economies of scale for lift stations,

water mains, stormwater retention, and other utilities. Instead of requiring every project to function independently, the city should plan and support infrastructure investments that accommodate future growth. To encourage growth while protecting taxpayers, the municipal code should be updated to provide that flexibility. Modernizing these standards will help reduce unnecessary costs, improve efficiency, and make development more practical and competitive.

7. What issue do you believe needs addressing?

Davis: We've talked about housing and infrastructure, but the budget should be balanced and look at consolidating some services with the county, that would help both the city and the county.

Heinrich: There are issues that come up nearly every day that need to be addressed. The most pressing issues with the city are common pressing issues with most every business in Jamestown. Hiring staff and being able to balance a budget based upon resources available. Another area we are researching is whether or not we are going to have to drill a new well or two to be able to ensure a proper supply of water to the water treatment plant. We could put together an endless list of issues but I think that is one that we want to prioritize at this time.

Hemmer: One issue that was recently brought to our attention through a tragic accident is the need for safer interactions between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. As we develop new neighborhoods and revitalize existing parts of the city, we should continue investing in infrastructure that supports active transportation and public safety. Expanding multi-use paths would create safer, more connected access between Jamestown's parks, ballfields, hiking trails, schools, neighborhoods, and businesses. Jamestown needs a transportation network that works for everyone — drivers, families, walkers, runners, and cyclists alike. That means building transportation corridors that separate pedestrian and bicycle traffic from vehicles whenever possible, while also improving properly marked crossings, signalized crosswalks, lighting, signage, and safe connections throughout the community. Good infrastructure is about more than convenience — it is about safety, quality of life, and planning for the future. Communities that invest in walkability and connectivity become more attractive places to live, raise families, and do business.

8. Other than housing, what other types of development would you like to see in Jamestown? Explain.

Davis: The area around the Bloom exit. Services are already there and foods such as carrot and onion processing, I feel would do well there, and a potato

chip processor would do well as we already have a french fry plant there, we have potato producers in the area, there is rail service there along with very easy access to the interstate with great east, west and north, south routes.

Heinrich: Jamestown is fortunate in that they have an excellent hospital and all around good medical facilities. We have excellent schools as well as a well respected university. Finding adequate daycare for many of the children of our young families is a challenge. The JSDC has a program where they have been trying to assist with daycares. The problem is twofold. We need the facilities as well as the people to work in those facilities. This is a serious matter that we must continue to focus on to further grow out our economy. If parents want to be working but can't because they have to stay home that takes people out of our workforce.

Hemmer: Jamestown needs development across all sectors of the economy. We need growth in the primary sector, including manufacturing, value-added agriculture, and tourism. Jamestown's location at the intersection of Interstate 94 and Highway 281, combined with access to a major rail corridor, gives us a tremendous competitive advantage. Products produced in Jamestown can be efficiently shipped across the country and around the world. Jamestown also sits at the crossroads of North Dakota's two largest economic drivers: agriculture and energy. That creates unique opportunities to attract businesses that add value to both industries before products ever reach the end user. An important part of building a sustainable economy is diversification. A strong local economy cannot rely on a single industry or economic cycle. By encouraging growth in manufacturing, tourism, small business, healthcare, retail, agriculture, and energy-related industries, we can create more stable jobs, strengthen the tax base, and better position Jamestown to weather economic downturns. Diversification will help ensure long-term prosperity.

9. What would you like to see accomplished in your first term if elected and why?

Davis: Groundbreaking for housing and business projects.

9. What would you like to see accomplished that wasn't during your last term of office and why?

Heinrich: We have a number of projects going on this year that are not yet totally accomplished one is the actual construction of the infrastructure for the residential lots. A lot of people have worked very hard on that and I do want to see that through to the finish. Another project that is going to be going on this year is the replacement of the 96" storm sewer from US 281 to I94. This is one of the largest infrastructure projects the city has undertaken

in quite some time. We are also very proud of the fact that this approximate \$9,000,000 project is going to be completed without the use of any locally generated tax dollars. There are also other economic development projects in the wings and I am hopeful once it is shown that there are going to be places for people to build homes in the city of Jamestown that will encourage companies to consider executing their expansion plans that are not yet finalized.

Hemmer: During my time as Mayor from 2010–2018, Jamestown saw major growth and investment. We added industrial development, commercial, retail, and service industry development, and institutional and multi-family housing. The area between Menards and Jamestown Regional Medical Center still represents one of the most important development opportunities in the city. The next phase of growth in this corridor should focus on completing the balance of commercial development, followed by additional multi-family housing and institutional living opportunities, eventually transitioning into single-family residential development. As Jamestown grows, we must also ensure our transportation infrastructure keeps pace with future demand. One of the city's long-term priorities must remain the development of a second grade-separated railroad crossing to improve safety and traffic flow between rail and vehicle traffic. We also need additional arterial road connections that link the Northeast residential growth areas with commercial and industrial development throughout the rest of the city. Better connectivity is essential for future residential expansion, workforce mobility, emergency services, and continued economic development.

10. What other topics not included in the other questions would you like to address here? Explain.

Davis: The needs of the citizens are first, wants are secondary, with the exception of the outdoor pool, that was promised and I will stand behind that promise and do what I can to help get the pool built.

Heinrich: The city, like most every employers, struggle with hiring employees. The city of Jamestown is a good employer with good wages and benefits. However, our income is limited and we are in the difficult situation where private industry often can beat our pay. We also have the situation where we have the state and the county that in many cases are able to pay their employees more than what the city has been able to afford. We are going to have to figure out a way to fix this and we will. The problem is with our budget a lot of the expenses are costs over which we have no control. This year we are going to have difficult budget sessions so we will have to look for efficiencies. When people speak of public safety they include police and fire. However, having clean water, proper sanitation, and proper streets and roads

also are part of the public safety equation for any city.

Hemmer: It is important to remember that the Mayor of Jamestown is not just another vote on the City Council. The mayor serves as the City's strongest advocate with other political subdivisions, as well as state and federal leaders and agencies. I have proven networking abilities and can leverage strong relationships with key state and federal officials to benefit Jamestown — from reducing regulatory burdens to securing outside funding and resources that support our community. The mayor is also the face of the community when welcoming new businesses, residents, and visitors to Jamestown. The position requires the ability to communicate effectively in every setting — from one-on-one conversations with residents and business leaders to addressing dignitaries, conferences, and conventions. Choose a leader who is prepared for all aspects of the job; a leader with the energy and courage to support visionary growth and make difficult decisions with compassion; a leader who will welcome development; a leader who will work toward solutions to problems and model a “can do” attitude. Vote Katie Hemmer for Mayor of Jamestown.