

John S. Haeussler for Hancock City Council

Hello –

My name is John S. Haeussler and I'm running for an at large seat on the Hancock City Council. Please allow me to tell you a little about myself:

EXPERIENCE

My local government experience is highlighted by serving on the Hancock City Council for much of the past decade. I served a four-year elected term from November 2010 through November 2014. I was appointed in June 2017 to fulfill the remainder of a term through November 2018. I was re-elected to a four-year term in November 2018 and chosen by my fellow councilors to serve as mayor. After experiencing two heart attacks in June 2019, I resigned from the council to focus on my health. Feeling greatly improved, I was appointed in March 2020 to return to the at large council seat that I vacated the previous year. My current appointment runs through November 2020. By law, my resignation created a partial term from November 2020 through November 2022. I am now running for these final two years of the term that I was originally elected to in 2018.

In addition to the Council I have also served on the following local governing bodies:

- City of Hancock Cemetery Board of Trustees
- City of Hancock Downtown Development Authority
- City of Hancock Housing Commission
- City of Hancock Local Advisory Council (Transit)
- City of Hancock Recreation Commission
- Hancock Housing Foundation (current)
- Hancock Public Schools Foundation
- Houghton County Land Bank Authority (current)
- Houghton County Recreation Authority (current)
- Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance (current)
- Western Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Region

I remain in good standing with the entities above and have cultivated positive relationships with the leadership of the Hancock Public Schools, Finlandia University, UPHS-Portage (Hancock's largest employer), Superior National Bank & Trust (Downtown Hancock's largest employer), the Hancock Business & Professionals Association, numerous Hancock businesses, the City of Houghton, Houghton County, the Keweenaw Chamber of Commerce, Michigan Technological University, local churches and synagogue, and service organizations such as the Hancock Rotary Club and the Kiwanis Club of the Copper Country.

EXPERIENCE (continued)

I was a board member of the Hancock Housing Commission and Hancock Housing Foundation during the development of Quincy Haven Apartments, a 24-unit special needs supportive housing facility at 1419 W Quincy St. As an officer of the Foundation I traveled to Lansing to sign all relevant funding documents and I was instrumental in getting the project's MSHDA HOME funds converted to Section 1602 tax credits, thus saving local entities over \$1M.

While serving on the board of the Hancock Public Schools Foundation I spearheaded HPSF's \$300K donation to the district, which helped to shield HPS from the governor's watchful eye and accelerated the elimination of the district's general fund deficit. Also with regard to the Hancock Public Schools: I suggested to the Board of Education the strategy that they're currently employing to maximize the district's non-homestead millage; I exhaustively researched the history of the district's bond debt at my own expense; and, I encouraged the district to amend several years of previously filed MTEC SmartZone tax capture reimbursement requests which resulted in the district receiving a six-figure sum from the State.

As chairperson of the City of Hancock Recreation Commission I proposed the 2016 recreational millage that has successfully funded: new playground equipment at a handful of city parks and the campground; the bulk of the City's expense for the new dock/pier at the beach; capital improvements at the Driving Park ball fields and Houghton County Arena; the new tennis court at Terrace Park; equipment for ski trail maintenance; improvements to bike and pedestrian trails; and more.

During my time on the City of Hancock Downtown Development Authority I worked with the city manager to select the specifications and negotiate the purchase of the City's "big screen" and associated audio/visual equipment for outdoor movies and I participated in the launching of the DDA's downtown coordinator position.

A few highlights from my tenure on the Hancock City Council are: partnering with the Houghton County Land Bank Authority and a local developer for the successful redevelopment of 116 Quincy Street following the devastating 2009 fire; taking a lead role in recruiting and negotiating the employment terms of a city manager; initiating additional annual payments to reduce the City's retirement obligations; initiating the Ordinance Review Committee, which has begun the arduous process of updating the City's ordinances; and standing up to fellow Council member who I believe was no longer residing in Hancock, thus was ineligible to continue to serve as a City legislator.

I served as the chairperson of the Hancock Sesquicentennial Committee, spearheading a year-long celebration of Hancock history and co-authoring and co-editing the book, *Hidden Gems and Towering Tales: A Hancock, Michigan Anthology* (City of Hancock, 2013). I also authored *Hancock*, a local history volume in the Images of America series (Arcadia Publishing, 2014). The celebration and preservation of Hancock history is a passion of mine.

EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT

I have a B.S. with Distinction in Statistics and an M.A. in Applied Statistics, both from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. For the past 30+ years I've held an academic research position at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, primarily focusing on the behaviors, attitudes, and values of American youth.

ISSUES

There are so many issues that local government leaders must confront, many of them fiduciary, it feels insufficient to mention but a few. However, the electorate may wish to know the following:

I believe in funding our Police Department and providing its staff appropriate training to effectively execute their positions. Our law enforcement community is designed to serve for the benefit of our citizens, not their detriment, and it's the Council's responsibility to facilitate the provision of resources necessary for all of the City's departments to be positioned for success.

Having spent 30+ years researching youth substance use, I cannot in good conscience support the commercialization of marijuana. I believe that our community currently has a desirable equilibrium: those needing it for medicinal purposes or desiring it for recreational purposes have multiple avenues available in which to obtain it, while the lack of commercial entities reduces its visibility for our most vulnerable populations, including the community's youth.

I believe that the Council and city manager should continue to work on updating the City's ordinances and that the establishment of a code enforcement position is a necessity, and one that will be welcomed by the majority of the community.

I am an ardent supporter of the development of a business and industrial park within Hancock and of business recruitment and retention in general.

I believe that the City should work closely with the Hancock Public Schools, UP Health System-Portage, Finlandia University, and other local entities to facilitate a broad social media presence highlighting the many positive aspects of living and working in the City of Hancock.

FAMILY LIFE

My wife (who is a Hancock business owner) and I made a purposeful decision to move to Hancock and raise our two children here. We have established roots and are deeply invested in the community. We are members of Church of the Resurrection (Roman Catholic) and have lived in the City of Hancock for over 13 years.

SUMMARY

I believe that my experience in local government, network of associates, and demonstrated commitment to community service and enhancing the quality of life of my fellow citizens leaves me uniquely positioned to be a member of the City of Hancock's leadership team moving forward.

I am endorsing the following candidates for Hancock City Council:

At Large: John S. Haeussler

Ward I: Ron Blau

Ward II: Rick Freeman, Jr.

Ward III: Kurt Rickard

I would greatly appreciate receiving your vote for at large City Council member in the November 3rd election.

Thank you for your time and consideration! Please stay safe and be respectful of others.