

VOTER GUIDE – NOVEMBER ELECTION
CITY of ROYAL OAK

Tuesday, November 7, 2017
POLLS ARE OPEN 7:00 A.M. – 8:00 P.M.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OAKLAND AREA

Website: www.lwvoa.org **E-mail:** contact@lwvoa.org **Phone:** 248-594-6602

Go to www.LWVOA.org and Click on ‘Candidate Forums’ for 10/11 forum information.

2 Candidates for MAYOR for ONE 2-year term

<p>CANDIDATES for Mayor</p> <p>ONE 2-year term <i>Vote for no more than ONE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for Mayor and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>MIKE FOURNIER 711 S. Alexander Royal Oak, MI 48067</p>	<p>I was first elected in 2011 and have been Mayor since 2016. I’m an MSU graduate and earned my MBA from the University of Notre Dame. My wife and I have three children who attend Keller Elementary and we belong to St. Mary’s Catholic Church.</p> <p>Qualities and Skills:</p> <p>Listens to Residents: Whether at church, school, talking to business owners, meeting with neighborhood associations or civic clubs, or just chatting with folks on the street, I am dedicated to listening and responding to residents’ concerns and suggestions. This has, and will continue to inform every decision I make.</p> <p>Gets Results: When I first ran for office I promised to balance our budget, resolve our long-term pension liabilities, grow property values, attract new jobs & investment and improve services. We have done just that.</p> <p>Experienced: I have 6 years on the commission (also served on the Planning Commission, Library Board, and Parks & Rec Board) and 20 years of professional finance, budgeting and business development experience. I’m honored to use the skills I’ve developed over my career for the benefit of us all.</p>	<p>We need to maintain strong financial stewardship including closing out our legacy retirement costs, growing property values & multi-year budgeting which allows us to invest in our future. I am committed to building a healthy, vibrant & strong Royal Oak for current & future generations. As Mayor, I will:</p> <p>Keep Royal Oak safe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep our police, fire and EMS services strong • Expand community-based policing initiatives • Build new police station to improve efficiency <p>Protect our thriving neighborhoods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold developers & landlords accountable • Design an aging-in-place plan for our city so seniors can live independently in our neighborhoods as long as they like • Plant more trees, increase investments in our parks & develop splash pad for our youth <p>Improve core city services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete road repairs ahead of schedule & under budget • Increase recycling efforts across the city • Advance green storm water management plans to keep water out of our basements • Enhance senior services, including senior transportation & investing in programs that help seniors afford home repairs

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

<p>CANDIDATES for Mayor</p> <p>ONE 2-year term <i>Vote for no more than ONE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for Mayor and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>MIKE D. SKINNER 130 E. Sunnybrook Royal Oak, MI 48073</p>	<p>I have lived in Royal Oak for over 50 years. Beyond being a concerned citizen I started and grew my first business in Royal Oak from to a company that employed 120 people in the technology industry. Since that time I have run multiple technology companies and food businesses. Currently today I have started Oakland Urban Growers a company that is producing local herbs, garnishing and spices for local Restaurants and Produce companies.</p> <p>Personally, I am engaged, have two children from my first wife (deceased) and have three Stepchildren with my best friend Joyce.</p> <p>I was "man of the year " for Leukemia of Southeast Michigan, sat on boards for my local schools and have been involved with many of my churches activity.</p> <p>My background in working with people, finance, budgets and most important people will make me a great candidate for Mayor.</p>	<p>1) Bring new voices to Royal Oak, for the last 12-16 years there has been the same group of people running the city and we need to have conversations that listen to other voices. Create open forums or town halls to openly discuss major city initiatives. Like the Farmers Market, Sidewalks, and Public works projects.</p> <p>2) Manage the city's finances in a manner that is more conservative. The city has and continues to take on a large amount of debt that is not helping the citizens putting the city a precarious position in the future. This includes ensuring that major contracts are not given to contractors without a fair and transparent bidding process.</p> <p>3) Use technology to improve city services and businesses services while reducing costs. This would including Parking, Public Services, Public complaints, and concerns.</p>

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

5 Candidates for CITY COMMISSION for THREE 4-year terms

<p>CANDIDATES for City Commission</p> <p>THREE 4-year terms <i>Vote for no more than THREE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for City office and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>SHARLAN DOUGLAS 813 N. Washington Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48067</p>	<p>I grew up outstate on a horse- and Christmas tree farm, graduated from Michigan State with a BA in journalism and got my first job in Detroit right after I graduated. I've worked in public relations and marketing since then, first as a consultant then using those skills as an executive with a business incubator, the Eight Mile Boulevard Association and a chamber of commerce. I established my own consulting firm in 2005. I studied planning in the graduate program at Wayne State University. I've served on the Royal Oak Planning Commission for 11 years and am a past president of the Michigan Association of Planning. Along with my planning experience, I think my marketing knowledge enhances the decisions we make at the commission table.</p>	<p>Public safety: Our budget must give police officers and firefighters the training and equipment they need to succeed. At every step of the way I have voted for a new police station which we will build once bond financing is secured.</p> <p>Helping seniors age in place. People should be able to stay in the homes for as long as they choose or find reasonably priced single-floor living in the city. We should seek new transportation options for those who can no longer drive. We should preserve and strengthen the R.O.S.E.S program and the home improvements loan fund for low-income people.</p> <p>We must support our neighborhoods and home values. We need firm but fair code enforcement. We must maintain our network of parks and support our schools. The school bond issue, which I support, will contribute to that success. Many young owners chose Royal Oak because of our vibrant downtown. 180,000 square feet of new downtown office space will attract young professionals who want to live near their jobs.</p>

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

<p>CANDIDATES for City Commission</p> <p>THREE 4-year terms <i>Vote for no more than THREE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for City office and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>KIM GIBBS 3342 Harvard Royal Oak, MI 48073</p>	<p>A Royal Oak home owner since 2002, I am active in the community and have been for the past 15 years. As an attorney with a great deal of real estate and finance experience, I am running for City Commission because Royal Oak is an unbelievable city. However the past few years have shown our elected officials doing a poor job of listening and acknowledging the concerns of our residents. The elected officials have exceeded the City borrowing limits set by the Charter. Residents are concerned about the rats in our neighborhoods, the flooding of our streets and basements, the City not having an RFP for the development of the new City Center, handing over a \$5.5 million dollar subsidy to the developer and the selling of city property worth at least a million dollars for \$1.00. Given the current administration's incompetence in managing the City's finances, I believe I'm the best choice to address these failures and future issues with the City.</p>	<p>The three issues where I will focus, in no particular order, are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) prioritizing neighborhoods, including addressing the rat infestation and fixing our roads and sewers, 2.) keeping resident costs low, 3.) maintaining and improving public safety. <p>Over the past five years our millage rates have increased 50%, including a special street millage and public safety millage. Our roads remain pothole marked and jarring to drive. Residents pay exorbitant amounts for minor repairs to our sidewalks, and in fewer than ten years, the work often has to be repeated. Our tax dollars are not being used wisely, as shown by the recent vote of city officials to sell valuable downtown real estate for \$1.00, with an additional subsidy of \$5.5 million dollars of tax payer money to a developer that is politically tied to the current administration. The costs of this project add up to at least \$2,000.00 per household. \$2,000.00 per household would be better used to address the sewer flooding and rat infestation.</p>

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

<p>CANDIDATES for City Commission</p> <p>THREE 4-year terms <i>Vote for no more than THREE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for City office and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>RICHARD KARLOWSKI 419 Virginia Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48067</p>	<p>Age -59. Royal Oak homeowner since 2006.</p> <p>Member of the Citizens Traffic Committee & Royal Oak Historical Commission (organized Civil War Day at Orson Starr House last 3 years), former member of the Royal Oak Zoning Board of Appeals</p> <p>BS – Michigan Technological University, MS – University of Michigan Certified Quality and Reliability Engineer – ASQ</p> <p>Over 30+ years of experience, over 24 in my current position with GM.</p> <p>I became interested in running after watching/attending City Commission meetings and speaking at the podium. Believe a fresh way of doing business is needed.</p> <p>I will bring an engineering skill set to the Commission. A decision making approach based on data, not just opinion. An ability to question the status quo and compare methods used by other cities to seek out the most efficient way (not just the cheapest) to deliver the services the residents expect.</p>	<p>Transparency & Trust: No votes on issues the same night as the public hearing. Resident input must be considered before any decisions are reached. All city contracts and development agreements will be via the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. All major bond proposals to be voted on by residents.</p> <p>Neighborhoods to be a Priority, not an Afterthought: Keep Royal Oak family friendly – budget for upgrade/care for parks, ensure adequate police presences outside downtown, insist on code/zoning enforcement on builders and rental properties. Sewer/street/sidewalk maintenance should be paid for by current tax dollars, not special assessments.</p> <p>End Crony Capitalism and Corporate Welfare - All city development project to go through an open Request for Proposal process with amount of tax breaks and other tax funds requested being a criteria for selection. Never again will we give a developer \$5.5 million dollars from the general fund, all without an open bid process.</p>

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

<p>CANDIDATES for City Commission</p> <p>THREE 4-year terms <i>Vote for no more than THREE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for City office and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>MELANIE MACEY 729 N. Wilson Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48067</p>	<p>I am a 13-year resident of Royal Oak. We bought our home here and have since welcomed three children into the world. I'm a lawyer with a background in legal services work, specializing in the past representing survivors of domestic violence and families embroiled in the child welfare system. I'm now at the University of Michigan Law School, where I help students who hope to pursue careers in public service. I have been active in the community as a PTA chair, a Sunday School teacher at St. John's Episcopal Church, and as a trustee of the RO Library Board.</p> <p>I love Royal Oak. I'm running to help shape the city where my children are growing up and to make sure we live up to our potential. I believe we can improve people's lives and our community. I want to bring out the best we as a city have to offer: increasing citizen engagement, bringing creative problem-solving to our city's challenges, and listening to and including all residents' varied viewpoints. Royal Oak is a vibrant city, and together we can make it a welcoming place for all families, seniors, and young professionals.</p>	<p>Responsible Development: Keep our attractive downtown vibrant but right-sized to our city. We should stay on pace with our potential but not outpace it. Royal Oak is growing, but slowdowns are inevitable. The commission has approved projects to meet downtown office space goals. A downtown hotel is being built. Let's monitor these projects and take steps to ensure future development can be supported and meets the needs of all.</p> <p>Green: Our trees, parks, and green space make our city special. We need to protect our resources both for their inherent value and the impact on our lives. We have a unique opportunity with the development of Normandy Oaks. Together we can shape a grand space we can all be proud of.</p> <p>Senior-friendly: As Baby Boomers enter golden years, we must be responsive. We need more senior housing and senior-friendly (single-story) new developments. We must bolster the local transit options and hours. We need to consider seniors as downtown changes – amenities and activities that are attractive and keep everyone involved. Keep the Farmers Market in focus and accessible.</p>

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

<p>CANDIDATES for City Commission</p> <p>THREE 4-year terms <i>Vote for no more than THREE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for City office and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>DAVID POULTON 2632 Glenwood Rd. Royal Oak, MI 48073</p>	<p>I am a 45 year old, married, father of three. After several years of difficult economic times, Royal Oak is moving in the right direction. I am seeking re-election to the City Commission to ensure we remain focused on matters that will enhance our property values and allow us to remain a strong and vibrant community.</p> <p>As a City Commissioner, I have looked out for Royal Oak taxpayers, made our community more secure and safe and held our government accountable. The residents of this city have demonstrated their trust and confidence in my abilities by electing me to the City Commission in 2009 and 2013.</p> <p>Also, as a small business owner, I understand what it means to have to live with the regulations and taxes local government imposes. I believe our city government must be less bureaucratic and more responsive to its citizens' needs.</p>	<p>Public Safety – As a City Commissioner, I led the effort to crack down on local motels that had become magnets for dangerous criminals. I am committed to ensuring our community remains safe and secure by maintaining highly skilled and trained Fire/E.M.S. and Police personnel.</p> <p>Accountability – I remain committed to prioritizing our budget to fund city services in the most efficient manner possible and will oppose wasteful expenditures. We must also hold accountable anyone who endangers this city. I will continue my efforts to clean up sloppy construction sites that have blocked sidewalks, interfered with adjoining properties and left dangerous conditions accessible to children.</p> <p>Thriving Community - Royal Oak has been recognized as a city with some of the fastest rising home values in the country and one of the best places in Michigan to live. We see the construction of a downtown hotel, development of office buildings and creation of hundreds of new jobs. I am committed to continuing to make decisions that create a positive environment to sustain this unparalleled growth.</p>

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

2 Candidates for CITY COMMISSION for ONE partial term ending 11/25/2019

<p>CANDIDATES for City Commission</p> <p>THREE 4-year terms <i>Vote for no more than THREE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for City office and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>BRANDON ANTHONY KOLO 600 E. Hudson Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48067</p>	<p>Before starting a family, my wife and I knew that Royal Oak would be the best place to raise our future children. Today, we are proud to call Royal Oak our home and I want to help make sure the community we're raising our son in is as healthy and strong as possible.</p> <p>Our city consistently makes lists of best places to live, and with the right leadership, the future only looks brighter. Our downtown will see major changes with additions of a new hotel, office space and civic center bringing new jobs, residents, and retail. We also have an opportunity to develop a new 40-acre residential park at Normandy Oaks. We need strong leadership to manage these projects and to ensure the voice of our community is heard every step of the way.</p> <p>As your commissioner, I will ensure Royal Oak remains a vibrant community that we are all proud to call home, whether raising a family or enjoying one's golden years.</p> <p>About Brandon: Father, husband & Royal Oak homeowner Graduate of Michigan State University Expertise in sustainability and green technologies Small business owner Member RO Library Board</p>	<p>We have a great community, with strong neighborhoods, and quality city services. But to keep things on the right track, we need leadership that listens, understands the needs of our residents and is always striving to improve on what's not working. With your support, I will dedicate my passion, skills, and expertise to making Royal Oak even better. I will stand for:</p> <p>Strengthening Neighborhoods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better maintain our parks & protect greenspace • Hold landlords and builders accountable for maintaining their sites • Use green infrastructure to capture water runoff and reduce risk of flooding <p>Improving City Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand senior transit options • Fully fund police, fire, and EMS protection • Protect and Invest in the Senior Center & Farmers' Market <p>Increasing Community Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase resident participation in all decisions • Better use technology to share information • Strengthen & empower citizen boards and committees

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

<p>CANDIDATES for City Commission</p> <p>THREE 4-year terms <i>Vote for no more than THREE</i></p>	<p>Question 1: Please provide biographical information and explain why you are running for City office and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position.</p>	<p>Question 2: What are the top 3 Priority Issues that the city should address and what actions would you take regarding each of them?</p>
<p>RANDY LEVASSEUR 203 Waverley Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48067</p>	<p>I moved to Royal Oak in 1988, found I loved the City, and have been here ever since! I'm married with a college-aged son who graduated from Shrine High School in 2015. I'm running for city commission because Royal Oak is a great city, but we have problems in city hall. Our elected officials are doing a poor job listening to residents, are spending money unwisely, and have exceeded the borrowing limit set by voters through our charter. To ensure that we maintain a great quality of life in Royal Oak, we need some changes. Professionally, my expertise is in real estate law and I started my own law firm in 1999. I've been self-employed ever since. In 2010, I noticed that many people needed help fighting unlawfully high property tax assessments, so I started a small business dedicated to helping them. Since then, I've helped the owners of thousands of homes throughout Michigan reduce their property taxes! With my background, I believe I can help Royal Oak focus on providing core services that matter to residents while keeping costs down.</p>	<p>My focus would be on (1) maintaining and improving public safety, (2) fixing our roads and sewers, and (3) keeping costs down for residents. Addressing these priorities will require city officials to be more prudent with city finances. Unfortunately, they have done poorly here in recent years. Our millage rate is up 50% since 2012. Water and sewage rates are among the highest in the region. Property owners are charged for expensive sidewalk installations and repairs. Residents are willing to pay for quality services, but too often city officials have not used tax dollars wisely. For example, city officials recently voted to give \$5.5 million of taxpayer funds to a politically-connected developer to build his private office building, PLUS give him one of the most valuable parcels of real estate in our downtown for just a dollar! Their contract with the developer also would require the City to demolish and relocate its city hall and police station. Total costs would add up to more than \$2,000 per household. Those funds would be better used serving the priorities of city residents.</p>

CITY OF ROYAL OAK (Continued)

THERE ARE 2 CITY PROPOSALS ON THE BALLOT.

<p>PROPOSAL TO REMOVE OBSOLETE AND SUPERSEDED CHARTER PROVISIONS IN CHAPTERS THREE AND FOUR OF THE ROYAL OAK CITY CHARTER</p>	<p>At the general city election in November 2011 voters adopted amendments to the Charter at Chapter Three, Section 4, adjusting the date and time commissioners and the mayor would start and end their terms of office from the first Monday in December to the third Monday in November in the year of their election. This proposal, if adopted, would remove obsolete and superseded references from Chapter Three, Sections 3, 4, 5 and 9 and Chapter Four, Section 21 that still refer to the rescinded term of office that started on the First Monday in December.</p> <p>Shall the proposal be adopted?</p>
<p>PROPOSAL TO REMOVE CHARTER PROVISIONS IN CHAPTER FOURTEEN, SECTION 11 OF THE ROYAL OAK CITY CHARTER</p>	<p>Chapter Fourteen, Section 11, requires that any public improvement costing more than \$1,000 can only be approved after drawings, profiles, and estimates are submitted to the commission. The limitation of \$1,000 was set by the Charter adopted in 1921. The proposal, if adopted, would eliminate this section and allow the city commission to set the limitation.</p> <p>Shall the proposal be adopted?</p>

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