

Eunice Friesen responses

Candidate for Mayor of Grande Prairie

1. Will you oppose privatization of municipal services and infrastructure, including Public-Private Partnerships aka P3s? Will you support bringing previously privatized services in-house?

I will listen to all possible solutions when making decisions about provision of municipal services. My preference is to keep services and infrastructure in-house whenever possible. For example, last term, I supported bringing accessible transit back in-house. Where it makes fiscal sense to partner in building or operations, I will do so. For example, P3, subsidizing, or using social support organizations to build or operate supportive housing.

2. Will you support your employees and your community by ensuring the municipality employs staff with living wages, full-time hours where desired, job security, and collective bargaining rights?

Yes

3. Will you oppose attempts from the provincial government to legislate against municipal staff including cuts to the Local Authorities Pension Plan, or restrictions on their right to strike?

Yes. I was an RN for 25 years and understand the importance of these rights and protections.

4. How do you propose your municipality deal with funding shortfalls, cuts, and downloading of responsibilities from federal and provincial governments? Do you favour spending cuts over tax increases?

Last term we reduced taxes by nearly 1%, but it isn't sustainable without service reductions and resulting layoffs. I believe we can do more with the budget we have, while keeping in line with inflation. Doing more means priority-based budgeting and continuous improvements to meet the changing needs of our municipality.

5. Do you support measures such as mask mandates,

vaccine “passports”, and vaccine mandates for staff to limit and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in your municipality?

Yes. I support the right of organizations and businesses to mandate measures they feel necessary to meet public health orders and to protect the health of their employees and residents.

6. Do you support measures to reduce municipal reliance on services fees and fares, such as eliminating transit fares?

Wherever possible, yes.