

## **John Middleton-Hope responses**

### **Candidate for Lethbridge City Council**

#1. In principle yes I oppose privatization of municipal services. The key is "service" and not profit. Your second part of this first question is too vague to provide a substantive answer to.

#2. IAFF, AUPE\*\*, Lethbridge Police Association, CUPE and other civic unions currently represent municipal employees in Lethbridge. All have collective agreements in place that provide for the working conditions you outline. So yes, I support collective agreements.

#3. The Special Forces Pension Plan has been through this and it has taken decades to recover from the Getty government's actions and so I do not support any disruption by the Provincial Government to impact wages, pensions or benefits. However to the second part of your question, I do not believe essential services should have the right to strike; afterall they provide an "essential service" but let's make sure we are clear on the definition up front rather than a change to the definition or the addition of another group that was not previously designated an essential service. In the absence of such a designation, I am not opposed to the right to strike so long as the provision is contained in the collective agreement.

#4. I support efficiency examinations which I have seen from personal experience (as Chief of Police) can be very effective in managing budgets and therefore resources. It is inevitable that both levels of superior governments will reduce funding and grants to municipalities in the future. As a municipality we must be ready with projects (shovel ready) to take full advantage of any funding, however it must also align with two things, the city's strategic plan that is agreed to by a majority of citizens and there must be a means to recover operating costs moving forward. I do not favor increases in taxation for the sake of increasing the budget. Major initiatives on the horizon will need to be reviewed very carefully to determine if they are "needs" versus "wants."

#5. Absolutely! It is the only way we appear to be able to manage this pandemic. It is a small price to pay, getting vaccinated, wearing a mask indoors in public, washing your hands. Requirements of this nature do not infringe on the basic rights of citizens (for reference have a look at the Constitution Act, and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and finally the Bill of Rights) none talk about restricting a government's ability to better protect its citizens.

#6. The "CEO" doesn't take public transportation. Transit affordability is important, just as accessibility is also important. The city's most recent Link program is not working well and is impacting many who rely on public transportation. A review of routes and access is in order. I would like to see employers step up and provide funding to employees who genuinely are impacted by the cost of ridership on public transportation. I am not in favor of reducing service fees as I believe those that use services should also pay for them. If the government wants to add additional tax on alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and even gasoline with a portion going directly to municipalities I am in favor of that. As your question is worded, I do not support eliminating service fees. The city relies on service fees (traffic summonses, parking fines etc.) to offset the cost of taxation.

\*\* AUPE note – AUPE does not represent City of Lethbridge staff.