

Town Council Application for Appointment

Applications must be submitted by 5 PM on Thursday, June 20, 2019.

Interviews, which are open to the public, will be held at an upcoming Council meeting. Once a date is determined, the Town will alert the public through its website and Town Manager weekly newsletter.

An appointment is expected to be made at the regular Town Council meeting on Tuesday, July 23, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. Please note, the term for this appointment will be until November 2020 at which time the position will come up for election.

Please note that the completed form and the answers to the questions on the form are public records upon receipt by the Town Clerk and are subject to full disclosure.

If you have any questions about the application form, the appointment process, or the duties and responsibilities of a Town Councilmember, please feel free to contact Town Clerk Carla Kacmar at 258-4660.

Name: * Steve Burdo

Address: * [REDACTED]

City: * San Anselmo

State: * CA

Zip: * 94960

Phone

Number: * [REDACTED]

Other Phone

No:

E-mail

address: * [REDACTED]

I am a Yes

No

registered

voter in San

Anselmo: *

How long have 11 years

you been a

resident of

San

Anselmo?*

Occupation: * Public Information Officer

Please describe your educational background, including degrees, special distinctions or honors, and the dates received. Special training and/or skills should also be noted.

I possess a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and Public Administration from Central Connecticut State University. I currently serve as a Public Information Officer (PIO) for Contra Costa County, specializing in the areas of public safety and emergency services, which has allowed me to garner extensive experience in emergency services management in my role as lead PIO on numerous emergency services deployments, including:

-Serving as one of the lead PIOs for the Sonoma County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during the

2017 North Bay Fires.

- Serving as one of the lead PIOs during the 2017 Morgan Territory Landslide
- Serving as one of the lead PIOs during the 2018 Mt. Diablo and Byron Fires
- Serving as lead PIO for numerous “shelter in place” deployments in 2017 and 2018.

With regards to credentials and certifications, I have received the following:

- Graduate of the 2018 California Association of Counties (CSAC) Institute for Excellence in Local Government, receiving the Credentialed California County Senior Executive certification.
- Graduate of the 2017 Local Government Leadership Academy, receiving the Local Government Senior Executive Credential.
- Certified Emergency Services Public Information Officer through Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI).

Please summarize your involvement in community and civic activities. Include any offices held and/or significant accomplishments.

- Member of the Parks & Recreation Commission since 2012
- Member of the Community Facilities Master Plan Advisory Committee (2012-2014)
- Member of the Memorial Park Master Plan Community Advisory committee (2015-2017)
- Member of the Memorial Park Skate Park Coordinating Committee (2012-2014)
- Member of the San Anselmo Measure E Steering Committee (2015)
- MC of the San Anselmo Town Easter Egg Hunt (2013-2017, 2019)
- Board member of nonprofit Advocates for Child Empowerment & Safety (ACES) since 2015
- Elected member of the Democratic Central Committee of Marin (DCCM) since 2008

Please explain why you wish to be a member of the San Anselmo Town Council and describe what skills or unique qualifications you would bring to the Town Council.

I would like to become a member of the San Anselmo Town Council because I love this Town, the residents, our local businesses and our sense of community. Since I first moved to San Anselmo in 2008, I have been heavily involved with many of our Town’s programs, services and events, and have dedicated the lion’s share of my free time to serving our community (including all of my service engagements listed in the previous question). As such, I would relish the opportunity to step up my engagement and work closely with our amazing staff and Town Councilmembers to ensure that our community is fiscally viable, vibrant, prepared for emergencies and to help maintain San Anselmo’s

small town charm and character while making sure our infrastructure is sound and able to accommodate usage well into the future.

I bring a number of unique qualities that would benefit the Town, including:

-My years of voluntary service on numerous Town commissions, committees and boards. These engagements have allowed me to develop a comprehensive understanding of the Town's budget functions, budget process, opportunities and challenges.

-My employment as an executive level public safety and emergency services public information officer for a Bay Area municipality (Contra Costa County), which has allowed me to become familiar with the relationship between elected bodies and the staff that are employed by the agencies they govern.

-My experience as a lead Public Information Officer during natural disasters and crises, including serving as one of the lead PIOs during the 2017 North Bay Fires, the 2017 Morgan Territory Landslide, the 2018 fires in Byron and on Mt. Diablo, and numerous "shelter in place" deployments (in addition to the numerous annual and quarterly emergency crisis trainings I receive through my employment).

-My experience as a local government communications specialist, which has allowed me to develop an acute understanding of how to better connect local government with the residents and stakeholders they serve.

-My experience as someone who has to commute to another county to work everyday, which has allowed me to better understand the traffic concerns shared by a significant number of our Town's residents who have similar commutes, in addition to better understanding the limitations of our public transportation system.

-My experience as someone who has previously ran for elected office in San Anselmo, which has allowed me to meet with thousands of our residents and stakeholders to better understand the issues that are most important to them.

In addition to my sheer love and appreciation of San Anselmo, I have a passion for public service and would like to apply my experience, commitment and willingness to the Town as a member of the Town Council.

Look 10 years into the future and describe what you want this Town to look like and why.

As someone who has lived in San Anselmo for over a decade, I can attest that the most noticeable changes in the last decade have been the decision to join the Central Marin Police Authority, businesses locating in and out of Town, the development of Imagination Park, the development of the Memorial Park Skate Park and a new Town Manager (as well as the election/appointment of new Councilmembers). While that may seem like a lot, that level of change can be seen as relatively well paced considering our size, scope and geography. Looking to the next ten years, I can envision a similar pace of change that would result in the following:

-The Town will be on sound fiscal ground because our Town Council and staff will have done their primary job of being effective fiscal stewards and will have taken strategic and financially viable steps to ensure the Town's fiscal future.

-Our programs will have expanded because we have addressed some of our most urgent facility needs and will be able to accommodate the strong demand for our stellar programs (daycare, after school enrichment, recreation programs, etc.). This vision includes the Town having made the long overdue improvements to Memorial Park, which will allow the Town to offer a broader array of programs that will serve people of all ages and activity types.

-Our infrastructure will be able to support the because we will have continued to be strategic fiscal stewards and effectively prioritize and fund our most urgent infrastructure needs.

-Aesthetically, the Town will continue to have a quaint but lively downtown, and storefronts that have sat vacant for years will be filled with desirable businesses. The new Memorial Park will be a hub of activity, with people of all ages and activity preferences utilizing it (as well as the awesome businesses in Red Hill Plaza) as their preferred commons.

-Families will continue to flock to San Anselmo as their preferred place to live because our schools, community resources and community programs will remain top notch.

I hope my response has provided you with an adequate idea of what I believe the future of San Anselmo looks like.

What are your three top priorities for the Town?

-Sound fiscal management - We are a Town that is “built out” with an essentially fixed revenue stream. My utmost priority would be sound fiscal stewardship to ensure that we are able to carry out the Town’s most urgent priorities.

-Infrastructure Maintenance & Improvements - Our Town’s facilities and infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, drainage systems, etc.) are dated and in constant need of maintenance. Ensuring the maintenance and improvements of our facilities and infrastructure would certainly be a top priority.

-Supporting Local Businesses - Sales tax revenue is an important aspect of our Town’s budget. In recent years we have seen unfortunate turnover in our local businesses. It is imperative that we work with our local business owners and residents to fill vacant businesses and ensure we have a desirable variety of local businesses that can generate revenue and make it easy for people (residents and out-of-towners alike) to patronize them.

What do you see as the role of Town Council? What do you see as the role of Town staff?

This is a dynamic I understand very well as a public employee working for an agency that is governed by an elected Board of Supervisors.

The first and foremost role of the Town Council, as is the case for any legislative body, is to approve and provide oversight over the Town’s budget and provide sound fiscal stewardship in it’s execution. As such, it is the primary responsibility of the Town’s staff, particularly the management and administration, to develop and execute the Town’s budget, demonstrating that same level of fiscal stewardship.

Beyond that, it is the role of the Town Council to connect with, and listen to, the Town’s residents and

stakeholders so that they may understand the prominent issues and, if necessary, bring issues to the Town's staff or Town Council for discussion, while remaining independent and impartial (ie being the representatives of the Town's residents and stakeholders in a fair and impartial manner). Additionally, it is the responsibility of the Town's staff to use their expertise to help identify emerging issues, and solutions to these issues (as well as those brought by Councilmembers and the public), and to provide expert insight and make recommendations to the Town Council so that the most important issues are addressed. Equally important is the role of the Town Council to understand, and assist in developing, the operational, infrastructural and public safety priorities of the Town and ensure that the Town's infrastructure and facilities are able to accommodate the current and future demands to allow for ongoing use with minimal impact to the Town's residents, businesses and stakeholders, and that our community is safe and prepared for emergencies. Finally, it is the role of both the Town Council and staff to ensure that the Town and it's residents are able to thrive.

Give an example of how you would resolve a situation where your personal philosophy is at odds with what is best for the Town.

This issue is commonplace in my line of work, as I will occasionally have to serve as the spokesperson for decisions my employer makes that I don't personally agree with. If there was a situation where my personal philosophy is at odds with what is best for the Town, I would ensure that there is a robust debate and that my point of view (or the point of view of my constituents) was voiced in a professional and respectful manner. If, at the end of the day, my colleagues on the Town Council did not agree and voted against what I thought was best, or the Town's staff showed overwhelming evidence that what I preferred was not in the best interest of the Town, I would accept the results and move forward with the knowledge that I voiced those opinions in good faith while maintaining the respect of my colleagues, constituents and the Town's staff.

As the great poets Mick Jagger and Keith Richards wrote, "you can't always get what you want." I believe in that mantra and understand that being reasonable, practical, and acting with respect and professionalism are paramount to the role of a Town Councilmember.

What would you do if you were contacted directly by a resident or business to resolve a Town related problem?

In most cases, I would direct them to the appropriate Town staff (or other regional governmental body staff) that would best be able to answer their questions or address their issue. If necessary, I would help them gain access to the public information (if it is indeed public info and they did not know where to locate it) that they would need to be aware of in order to make informed decisions regarding their issue. I would also inform them that, as one of five members of the Town Council, I do not have the ability to unilaterally make policy decisions. However for issues that do not present a conflict for a Councilmember (ie questions regarding speeding on Sir Francis Drake, how to curb teen alcoholism in Town or how to better serve our elder population), I would do my job as a Councilmember and listen to their issues and discuss potential solutions (including the potential of bringing a presentation or item before the Town Council).

*If this was a dispute or issue that would potentially appear before the Town's Planning Commission (a typical occurrence), I would advise them that I am unable to be involved in resolving their issue since the Town Council serves as the appellate body for decisions rendered by the Town's Planning Commission. The same goes for any issue involving contracts with the Town, since those issues will ultimately be

decided by the Town Council.

If you are currently contracting with or providing services to the Town, are you willing to suspend those activities if appointed to the Town Council?

I do not have any conflicts in this regard, as I do not contract with the Town or provide any services to the Town (aside from my volunteer engagements). I also do not foresee any future conflicts as a result of contracting with, or providing services to, the Town.

What do you see as the biggest challenges facing the Town in the next year?

-Fiscal Outlook - The five year budget picture shows projected deficits on the horizon. Town departments are moving into a shared cost relationship, which will bring changes that will need the guidance and support of the council, as well as sound fiscal stewardship if we are to ensure the Town's economic health.

-Infrastructure Maintenance & Improvements - Our dated infrastructure needs to be maintained and improved amidst a challenging fiscal environment highlighted by fixed revenues and projected deficits.

-Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness - From fire threats on the hillside to flooding and other threats in the lowlands, it will be imperative for the Town to ensure our residents and businesses are prepared for emergencies and that the Town and our public safety providers are able to provide the support our residents and businesses need in times of crisis. Education and communication will be key.

-Maintaining & Strengthening Our Base of Local Businesses - In a challenging environment, it will be important to ensure the vibrancy of our business center. Filling vacant storefronts and attracting diverse and desirable businesses to our Town contribute to revenues will help ensure the Town's fiscal health.

-Protecting Our Natural Environment & Open Space - Climate change is real and the effects threaten our natural environment and open spaces. We must continue to provide effective environmental stewardship so that our future generations are able to enjoy all of the benefits San Anselmo has to offer.

What do you feel needs to be done to maintain and enhance the Town's economic health?

The following list represents what I believe are the most immediate actions the Town can take to ensure its current and future economic health:

-Exercising fiscal prudence by ensuring that there is no frivolous spending and that all funding decisions are made strategically and with the public's best interest in mind. Additionally we must address the projected budget deficit over the next five years.

-Restructuring programs and services.

-Increasing fees for services (ie Planning, Recreation, etc.).

-Exploring cost sharing mechanisms and partnerships (both internally and with other local municipalities and entities).

-Filling vacant businesses/storefronts with diverse and desirable businesses that will attract patrons to San Anselmo and generate additional tax revenue.

-Continue to budget effectively and strategically to ensure the future economic health of the Town.

-Light candles and pray that assessed valuations continue to increase ;)

Circumstances outside the Town's control can and have impacted dramatically the Town's budget. What approach would you take as a Councilmember to balance the budget or address the issues?

My approach would be to work with the Town's staff, my fellow Councilmembers, our residents and local businesses to identify the areas that would best address any budget shortfalls, including:

-Restructuring programs and services

-Increasing fees for services

-Cost sharing mechanisms and partnerships (both internally and with other local municipalities and entities)

-Postponing low-priority Town projects, and

-Considering funding through local ballot measures to name a few.

As an employee of a public agency that often has to react to circumstances outside of our control, I am very familiar with this dynamic and understand the need for a public agency to be able to be nimble, strategic and ensure service delivery all at the same time.

Have you reviewed the Town budget and are you familiar with where and how the Town receives its funding?

As a resident who has been an active participant in Town affairs over the last decade, I am very familiar with the Town's budget, particularly with regards to where the Town receives its funding. The overwhelming majority of Town's revenues have consistently been our property taxes (approx. 75%). Other taxes (Pension Override, Municipal Services, etc.), Permit and License Fees (Business License Tax, Meter and Construction fees) and Franchise Taxes (Garbage, Electricity & Gas, etc.) have consistently been the next highest contributors to our Town's revenues.

The Town's projected FY19/20 budget estimates approximately \$16.9 in revenues (that figure was \$16.1 million in the current fiscal year), which is consistent with the Town's annual budget revenues in recent years (though slightly higher due to the increase in assessed valuation). Property taxes, which make up approximately 75% of the total revenues received (approx. \$12.7 million projected for FY19/20), as always, are the largest source of revenue. The next highest contributors are Other Taxes (8.2% or approx. \$1.3 million), Permits and Licenses (6% or approx. \$1 million) and Franchise Taxes (4.3% or \$730k). Together, these sources represent approximately 93% of the Town's total projected revenues for the coming fiscal year and have been consistent around those levels in recent years (though there have been some fluctuations/decreases in certain categories over the last five years). The remaining 6-7% of the Town's revenues are derived from Transfers In (State Gas Tax Fund, Recreation Fund

unfunded pension liability payments, etc.), Fines (Parking, Library, etc.), State Revenue (Prop 172, VLF, etc.), Fees for Service (Resale Inspections, Planning Fees, etc.) and Miscellaneous Revenues (including donations), which combined equal approx. \$988,689.00 for the coming fiscal year (\$1.8 million in FY18/19).

I enjoy analyzing budgets, particularly our Town's budget, and I am acutely familiar with the Recreation Fund budget, having provided oversight of that fund for the last seven years as a member of the Town's Parks and Recreation Commission. Furthermore, in my current job, I responsible for the development and execution of department budgets totaling more than \$18 million.

Have you reviewed the Town's General Plan and Work Plan?

I am acutely familiar with the Town's General Plan and Work Plan, having participated in prior workshops with Town officials regarding various elements of both plans. As a long-standing member of the Parks & Recreation Commission, I am most familiar with the Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities element, though I am also very familiar with the Housing, Land Use, Open Space, Conservation and Noise elements of the General Plan having participated in a number of workshops regarding those elements in prior year updates of the plan, in addition to my significant interest in those areas.

I am also very familiar with the Town's Work Plan due to my strong grasp of the Town's budget, which is essentially the driver of the Work Plan priorities.

Additionally, I am very knowledgeable about the Town's Community Facility Master Plan and the Memorial Park Master Plan, having served on both Community Advisory Committees guiding those projects.

All persons serving on the Town Council are required by State law to disclose both their own and their spouse's investments and income. In addition, the appointee to the Town Council must be prepared to make a significant time commitment. Please indicate if there are any personal or professional time limitations on your availability to serve as a Councilmember.

I have no limitations with regards to this question. As an active Town resident, much of my free time is currently spent in service to the Town. As such, I would look forward to increasing my engagement as a member of the Town Council. Furthermore, as an executive class public employee, I am subject to the same public disclosures regarding income and asset disclosures and have no concerns about making that information public.

I hope my responses to these questions has conveyed my considerable interest in this appointment. Given the opportunity, I believe you would find me to be a well suited and capable addition to the Town Council, someone who will be able to effectively hit the ground running and ensure a smooth transition during this important mid-term appointment. Thank you for your consideration.

Additional Information:

Form submitted on: 6/20/2019 2:36:12 AM

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