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## 2018 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name:

Municipality

Date:

George Watson, Council

Wasaga Beach

08/23/18

Please return the completed questionnaire to the sender as soon as possible, but no later than October 4, 2018. **N.B: As this is a Word document, you can take as much space as you wish to respond.** The answers will be posted on the AWARE Simcoe website.

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1. Water is a finite resource. Do you feel there is a need to protect water, wetlands and recharge areas from development, aggregate extraction and other intrusive activities in your municipality? If so, how will you achieve this?

### ANSWER

*I agree that water, wetlands, and re-charge areas should be protected. As a former member of Wasaga Council for 11 years and a Council representative on the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, I have a sound working knowledge of efforts to protect the watershed. Wasaga Beach presently has no aggregate extraction activity but has a lot of development activity.*

*I am satisfied that the checks and balances currently in place will mitigate development proposals as they come forward. In this regard, in Wasaga Beach, all new development activity is currently required to proceed through a vigorous process that includes our Planning department, public meetings, Simcoe County*

*approvals, Conservation authorities and numerous studies, including for habitat issues.*

2. Development charges never fully cover the cost of new development. Will you make sure that all costs that *should be* paid by development charges under existing legislation *are* covered? When considering an application, on what basis will you decide whether a development is a net benefit for the community?

**ANSWER**

*Yes, I support new development being responsible to pay their costs, whether it is a residential or commercial project and in accordance to existing legislation, rather than have that burden borne by our general taxpayers.*

*The proposed Downtown Plan for Wasaga Beach is a prime example of our current Wasaga council not applying this principle. Numerous unanswered questions exist on this project, including but not limited to who will be responsible to pay for road improvements, land acquisition (expropriation), public access to the waterfront, or new bridge construction.*

3. Do you support/oppose expansion of the Greenbelt into Simcoe County? In either case, please explain why.

**ANSWER**

*I am familiar with the Greenbelt area just south of Simcoe County and the pros and cons. I will require significantly more information to support any such expansion into Simcoe County. For example, what are the benefits or pitfalls for expansion?*

*I acknowledge the existence of major development plans for housing and employment lands in the Innisfil region, but I will need to know how any such expansion of the Greenbelt into Simcoe County would affect our growth under the Places to Grow Act. I am registered to attend the Municipal Sustainability; Climate and Growth workshop on October 9, 2018 in Midhurst that may provide valuable information with respect to Greenbelt boundary changes.*

4. Simcoe County Council chose a county forest in Springwater – zoned Agricultural – as the site for a (needed) waste handling facility, the Environmental Resource Recovery Centre. Springwater Township objected, pointing out that this is an industrial use and there are suitable properties zoned Industrial. What is your view?

**ANSWER**

*There are many industrial lands available in Simcoe County for such a facility. In my view, it is not appropriate that a designated agricultural site being County Forest is used for the purpose of a waste handling facility.*

5. Since 1924, the Ontario Tree Seed Facility in Angus performed a vital task for the whole province of coordinating seed collection from 37 zones across the province to ensure seedlings are returned to grow in the zone to which they are uniquely suited. The Progressive Conservative government is reviewing the closing ordered by the Liberals. What is your opinion on this matter?

**ANSWER**

*I am in favour of keeping the Seed Plant open and operating. I agree with the position of our MPP Jim Wilson that the Seed Plant should not be closed, because of the valuable environmental services being provided in seedling protection.*

6. If elected, what are your top three priorities?

**ANSWER**

1. *Restoring a professional approach and atmosphere at the Wasaga Beach Council table and an independent thinking Council. The last 4 years at Wasaga Beach has seen a consistent "voting block" that follows the Mayor's lead at all times and a consistent 5-2 voting pattern, regardless of the issues.*

2. *We need to pause the proposed Downtown Plan in order to;*

*i. more fully engage the residents of Wasaga Beach;*

- ii. investigate all expenses associated with this development;*
- iii. ensure the developer is responsible to pay costs so that a net benefit to Wasaga Beach is realized.*

*To date, these answers have not been forthcoming from this Council.*

- 3. To focus the location of a new arena and Library/Cultural centre in central locations to benefit all residents. This will include exploring public/private partnerships with developers to ease the burden on our taxpayers for the construction of these facilities, including opportunities to locate a High School in Wasaga Beach, when the School Board and Province make such a decision.*

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Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire