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## 2022 Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name:

Municipality

Date:

George Watson

Wasaga Beach

August 30,2022

Please return the completed questionnaire to the sender as soon as possible, but no later than September 15, 2022. The answers will then be posted on the AWARE Simcoe website.

**N.B: As this is a Word document, you can take as much space as you wish to respond.**

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1. AWARE Simcoe considers the preservation of farmland, the protection of water resources and natural heritage, and providing transparency and accountability in government decision making to be the primary issues of this election.

Our goal is to elect representatives who support those objectives. Do you agree with this?

ANSWER- Yes

2. 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 – Official Plan ( County and Municipality), Zoning, working with agencies ( Conservation, different levels of Government).

3. Ancient deposits under the Simcoe Uplands in Simcoe County’s Tiny, Springwater, Oro-Medonte and Tay townships contain pristine groundwater.

This water is the purest water known to science, and is the gold standard for water worldwide, a national and global treasure.

Ongoing gravel pit extractions on French’s Hill, the water recharge area, now threaten to destroy this precious water. Will you work to protect this important local resource?

ANSWER – It is the responsibility of the 4 Townships mentioned and the Conservation Authorities in those areas. If they request assistance from Wasaga Council- the Council of the day will make a decision on the response.

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

ANSWER – Neutral. It is a balancing act and the municipalities affected will work with Conservation, The County, the Province to determine if any or no expansions can occur.

5. What are your plans to combat climate change in your municipality?

ANSWER – I am a member of the Wasaga Climate Action Team, the Wasaga Town representative on the NVCA, and our Council just recently has asked staff to look into both hiring a climate action specialist, and forming a Climate Action Advisory Board with the new council after the elections.

6. Every municipality in Ontario is faced with row-on-row sprawl-style development, and surrounding farmland is being destructively gobbled up with little regard for future agricultural needs. Ontario is losing 319 acres of farmland every day, it needs to be protected before it's too late. We need to ensure we have the land to grow food for today and future generations. Once it's paved over, it's gone forever!

How will you protect agricultural lands within your municipality?

ANSWER – Wasaga Beach has virtually no agricultural land within its urban boundary. Just about anything vacant is heavily treed and never used for agricultural purposes in the past. We do, however, have app. 4600 acres of Provincially protected land within our borders. Not ever used for farming but part of the Provincial Park- our largest landowner.

7. Simcoe County Council chose a county forest in Springwater Twp – zoned Agricultural, as the site for a (much needed) waste handling facility, the Environmental Resource Recovery Centre (ERRC). Many residents in Simcoe County objected to this location, pointing out that this is an industrial use and there are suitable properties zoned Industrial where the facility should be built. What is your view?

ANSWER- Not very familiar with this project or the location. On the surface it would seem to make sense to go to an Industrially zoned site but would have to research the rationale behind the decision.

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

ANSWER

1. Seeing and working with the re-development of our Main Beach area in Wasaga and the transformation into a year round hub of activity for residents and visitors. Our environmental assessment that was conducted will help both to protect the water and the beach and the new construction.

2. Securing and completing the construction of a High School for Wasaga Beach. This will be a major building block for the community and contribute to a “ complete community” which will have positive environmental benefits.

3. Completing our Master Drainage study for the Town to correct deficiencies in certain areas that are prone to flooding and to protect property and persons.

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Thank you for completing the AWARE Simcoe candidate questionnaire.