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**Barbara Derbawka – Stevenson**

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Derbawka for Mayor

Firstly, I congratulate everyone who is running for elected office. Best wishes to all of you. Deciding to run for public service and serving as an elected official is not for the faint-hearted. This is a role that requires passion and dedication. While public service can be challenging; at the same time it can be very fulfilling. It is very heartening to see that there is interest in our community for public service.

1. What inspired me to run for this position, and what is your goal?

I have aspired to public office since I was 16 – however education and my career superseded those wishes☺. I retired in 2015 and in 2017 had the privilege of successfully running for Eston Town Council. I very much enjoyed the experience. I am dedicated to serving the public interest and thus am running for office again.

My goal, in addition to new endeavors as identified by the Community, is to continue the progress and endeavors embarked on by previous Councils with respect to infrastructure and commitment to maintaining Eston as a vibrant, viable community and sought after place of residence or business.

2. What previous community experience do I have? How have I contributed to the community (projects, initiatives, etc?)

I came to Eston 30 years ago for my Financial Services career. I stayed as I married a member of this community - Scott Stevenson. I feel strongly that positive, engaged residents make a community. I have shown that in my volunteerism and running for elected office.

Since residing in Eston and in every other community that I lived in, I have been an active volunteer and participant in the community. My first volunteerism in Eston was as a booth convenor which began 1 month after arriving in Eston. What a great way it was to meet the residents of Eston!. Another organization that I was involved in was Gofer Days & July 1<sup>st</sup> and Eston Rodeo – since my first summer under the very valuable tutorship of Ernie Bull, until the pandemic, I coordinated many volunteers to take gate attendance. Over the years I have volunteered for: Dr. Holmes Scholarship Committee, Meals on Wheels, 4-H, Eston Economic Committee, Eston Board of Trade, Prairie West Historical Society PWHS (Eston Museum), West Central Museums. I am a Rotarian (Kindersley) and a volunteer in my church community which is located in Saskatoon. While on Council, I served on the Recreation, Library and Cemetery

Committees. I was very fortunate that my career provided employment in surrounding communities – Rosetown, Eatonia, Kindersley. While I continued to live and volunteer in Eston, I also volunteered in the communities I worked in.

3. What experience have prepared you to serve as an elected official?

I was a Councillor from 2017 to 2020. I was on the Great Plains Regional College Board of Directors as a Director and as President from 2014 to 2021, representing the Rosetown, Eston, Kindersley areas. While on the Great Plains Board, I was Co-Chair of the Saskatchewan Association of Regional Colleges. I have completed a Certificate in Public Service Governance while on the Great Plains Board. This is an intensive course on the process of governing or overseeing the control and direction of a provincial organization with a written exam that requires a 75% pass rate.

4. What are the top 3 priorities that I see for Eston moving forward?

Community, fiscal responsibility and open communication & transparent leadership.

*Community* – I like the definition in which the word conveys a sense of togetherness, positivity, solidarity and homeliness. Community is not just the town I live in, but extends to the RM as well as surrounding communities and beyond. We all need to work together to be the best community that we can be. How do we market Eston to be a destination community to live?

People have said that I want to close the Complex. This is not true. The Complex is central to our Community, but I do want it to be fiscally responsible.

*Fiscal responsibility* – with over 30 years in the financial services industry, I have the experience to look at how we manage our community from a fiscally responsible viewpoint. When making decisions, we need to look forward and understand the future impact of our decisions.

*Open communication & transparent leadership* – we must continue to share with residents decisions council is making. With no resident local paper, we do not receive coverage of council to the degree as was in past years. The monthly summary with our utility bills is good – can/should we expand this? Every resident has the right to attend/view council meetings. I think this is an area that needs to be reviewed and worked on.

5. How do you plan to maintain and establish new partnerships, given our reliance on them? Or what would I like to see in partnerships?

I fully support the valued partnership developed by past councils with the RM of Snipe Lake. There may be a need to develop further partnerships with surrounding RM's as well as extending current partnerships to drive conversations on our future moving forward. I also feel strongly that we further develop networking opportunities with our provincial counterparts. As

a municipality we rely on provincial legislation to exist. However, funding is shrinking and we need to find ways to preserve and increase revenues.

6. What do I see as my role and responsibility as an elected official towards our staff and taxpayers?

Staff and residents play important roles in municipal affairs. Without staff, taxpayers and residents, there would be no need for elected officials – and we would not have a community. All interactions with staff and residents must be treated with respect and dignity – whether or not opinions are agreed upon or differ. As elected council, we report to residents and we represent all residents. My role and responsibility is to be aware that the fiscal decisions I make as an elected official are not with my money but taxpayer funds, collected through municipal or provincial taxation. Decisions made may at times not have unanimous support. As an elected council, we need to be able to effectively communicate to all residents those decisions and how they benefit our community.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to introduce myself to the residents of Eston. I encourage all eligible residents to vote.