



2008 Municipal Elections Candidate Summaries

Dear reader:

A municipal election is coming up on Saturday, November 15. Mayors, councilors, and trustees will be elected for both Langley City and the Township. Traditionally, voter turnout is very low for civic elections, in part to the lack of mainstream media coverage. Many eligible voters know little or nothing about the candidates. Most don't feel that the issues at the municipal election are worth the effort.

The following are to be elected:

Langley City: 1 Mayor, 6 Council Members, 2 School Trustees

Langley Township: 1 Mayor, 8 Council Members, 5 School Trustees

Langley ARPA has put together a summary of all the candidates in both Langley City and the Township. Several issues that we touched on were:

- Crime strategy: Most candidates for council agree that more police would reduce crime. Some have other unique strategies. We found out their positions on harm reduction drug policies, which provides health care to addicts while helping them continue to abuse drugs.
- Union Policy: The BC Teacher's Federation contributes enormous amounts of funding to help elect trustees who are friendly to their interests. Most importantly, they want trustees to lobby the provincial government to overturn their decision to make education an essential service, removing their right to hold students hostage for their contract demands. While our children are not directly affected by a teachers' strike, it nevertheless takes a serious toll on our economy and infrastructure. ARPA's position is that education should remain an essential service.
- Pre-Kindergarten Program: The provincial government has recently put a proposal forward to introduce public school programs for 3 and 4 year olds, in addition to all-day kindergarten. ARPA's position is that this program further erodes parental involvement in the upbringing of their children, and will take huge amounts of public tax dollars to work. Those with children in private schools would not see any benefit.
- The HD Stafford High School decision: Many are upset that the high school was converted to a middle school with little public consultation. Four of the school trustees pushed through the conversion and a campaign has started to get rid of these four. These four trustees, for the most part, have otherwise served the school district well.

We encourage you to get out and vote. Even by voting for average candidates can ensure that a more radical candidate does not get elected.

For Langley ARPA, Neil Dykstra

Langley Township Municipal Elections November 2008

Candidates for Mayor, Council, and School Trustee



Kurt Alberts (Mayor, Incumbent)

Background: Alberts owns an art gallery in Fort Langley and has been the Township's mayor since 1999. His economic slogan is "One job for every worker".

Political alignment: No response

Crime Strategy: Opposed to harm reduction measures. He believes that funding for these issues must come from higher levels of government.

Notes: Mayor Alberts is the only member of council opposed to a requirement that developers construct low-income housing as part of their developments.



Rick Green (Mayor)

Background: Green is a financial consultant and has lived in Langley almost 12 years.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial), Conservative (Federal)

Crime Strategy: Neutral to harm reduction measures.

Notes: Green is campaigning on several fiscal ideas. First, he would sell some of the land that the Township owns in a transparent process, create a trust fund with the proceeds, and use the interest from the fund to keep property taxes low. He alleges that the land is currently being sold to insiders and friends for below-market prices. He also suggests a "zero-based" budgeting system instead of the current "use-it-or-lose-it" system that he says is wasteful.

Jordan Bateman (Council, Incumbent)

Background: Jordan was a journalist for the Langley Times before getting into civic politics. He is the youngest serving member of council at 30 years of age.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial), Conservative (Federal)

Crime Strategy: Strongly opposed to harm reduction measures. He supports an increase in police funding for more officers, and bylaws to make it easier to shut down marijuana grow operations.

Notes: Bateman has been a tireless advocate for a light rail transit system. He believes that Langley can save considerable money by amalgamating the Township and City councils. He regularly attends Christian Life Assembly and has been active with several Christian ministries.

Sukhi Dhami (Council)

Background: Dhami grew up in Langley and currently runs his own business. He has volunteered for a non-profit organization and helped raise money for the BC Children's hospital.

Political alignment: No response

Crime Strategy: Proposes 24-hour community policing.

Notes: Dhami was outperformed in the all-candidates debates.

Bev Dornan (Council)

Background: Dornan is a manager at the Otter Co-Op in Aldergrove.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial) Conservative (Federal)

Crime Strategy: No response when asked about harm reduction measures. She recognizes that crime, drugs, and homelessness are all pressing problems but offers no specific solutions.

Notes: Dornan was nominated for Business Person of the Year in 2007. She has served on various administrative boards, including the Langley Hospital Foundation and BC Chamber of Commerce.

Steve Ferguson (Council, Incumbent)

Background: Ferguson is a teacher by trade. He ran unsuccessfully for the Liberals in the 2000 federal election.

Political alignment: Liberals (federal)

Crime Strategy: No response to harm reduction. He does not think Langley needs more police but does believe that something must be done to keep repeat offenders in custody longer.

Notes: Ferguson attends Brookwood Baptist Church and says that his faith plays an active part in his work.



Langley Township Municipal Elections November 2008

Candidates for Mayor, Council, and School Trustee

Charlie Fox (Council, Incumbent)

Background: Fox was a school administrator.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial)

Crime Strategy: Will not comment on harm reduction. He is against the construction of a drug rehabilitation facility in the township. He spoke out against drug houses and grow-ops.

Notes: Fox has focused on transit and protecting green space in his first 3-year term in office.

Murray Jones (Council)

Background: Jones is an equipment operator, but also says he has worked as an actor, stunt man, and singer. He is president of the Langley Speedway Historical Society.

Political alignment: No Response

Crime Strategy: "I see some good and some harm in injection sites." Believes better urban planning will reduce crime.

Notes: Jones seemed out of his element at the candidates' meetings.

Mel Kositsky (Council, Incumbent)

Background: A longtime city councilor and former president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Political alignment: No response.

Crime Strategy: Supports harm reduction strategies and treatment centers. Blames the courts for their failure in dealing with criminals.

Notes: Mel believes that the federal and provincial governments are not contributing enough funding to municipalities to fulfill their responsibilities.

Bob Long (Council, Incumbent)

Background: Bob has been a councilor for nine years. He owns and manages several businesses, and was president of the Langley Chamber of Commerce in 1997.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial)

Crime Strategy: Neutral on harm reduction strategies.

Notes: Bob represents British Columbia in the Canada-wide Federation of Canadian Municipalities. He is mostly concerned about transit and pedestrian-friendly developments. He has described in the past how his faith helps him focus on the common good rather than personal gain.

Janet Megahy (Council)

Background: Also known as "Madame Butterfly", a local children's entertainer. Previously, she was a health worker and youth counselor at the YMCA.

Political alignment: No response.

Crime Strategy: No response.

Notes: Janet wants to improve the downtown core of Aldergrove. She performed poorly at the all-candidates' meetings.

Sonya Paterson (Council)

Background: Paterson has served as a school trustee for the last six years.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial) Conservative (Federal)

Crime Strategy: Supports harm reduction strategies.

Notes: Past president of Valley Transportation Advisory Committee. She wants to see light rail instead of Skytrain.

Kim Richter (Council, Incumbent)

Background: Richter has served three terms on the township council.

Political alignment: She ran for the federal Liberals in Langley in 2000.

Crime Strategy: Neutral to harm reduction strategies. She has spoken out about the need to deal with Langley's drug houses and grow-ops.

Notes: Richter is concerned with the rapid growth that Langley is experiencing. She proposes a tight reign on spending for new projects, and a restrictive development policy to make the township "similar to Whistler".

Dan Sheel (Council)

Background: Dan is a firefighter and is currently a parks trustee.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial) Conservative (Federal)

Crime Strategy: Strongly opposes harm reduction strategies. He wants to involve youth in cultural and sporting activities which will reduce crime.

Notes: Sheel speaks passionately about the need to expand the full-time firefighting service. He also stresses the importance of sports for the health of the community.

Glen Tomblin (Council)

Background: Glen is a local businessman. He has run for office in 2002 and 2005.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial and Federal)

Crime Strategy: No response

Notes: Glen has been critical of Mayor Alberts' land purchases, including the Redwoods Golf Course, saying the money could be better used on infrastructure and services.

Grant Ward (Council, Incumbent)

Background: Ward identifies himself as a business entrepreneur, and has been in council for six years.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial) Conservative (Federal)

Crime Strategy: Strongly opposes harm reduction strategies.

Notes: Many of Grant's opinions are similar to current mayor Kurt Alberts.



Langley Township Municipal Elections November 2008

Candidates for Mayor, Council, and School Trustee

Joan Bech (School Trustee, Incumbent)

Background: Was president of Otter Co-op for two terms, and school trustee for three terms.

Union Policy: Believes education should not be an essential service. She has been endorsed by the BCTF.

Pre-Kindergarten: Supports the idea if fully funded by the province.

Steve Burton (School Trustee, Incumbent)

Background: Burton is a managing partner of a Langley law firm. His long list of achievements include one term as township councilor, three as school trustee, and director of Langley Boys and Girls Club.

Union Policy: Education should be an essential service.

Pre-Kindergarten: If the ministry moves forward, the program must be fully funded and slowly implemented.

Notes: Burton was one of the four trustees who voted for the reconfiguration of HD Stafford.

Hattie Hoegterp (School Trustee, Incumbent)

Background: Has served two terms as trustee, holds a master's in early childhood education.

Union Policy: Defer to the provincial government on essential service designation.

Pre-Kindergarten: Believes the province should first institute a child care program.

Notes: Hoegterp was one of the four trustees who voted for the reconfiguration of HD Stafford.

Wendy Johnson (School Trustee)

Background: Spent 35 years as a teacher and principal.

Union Policy: Education should not be an essential service. She is endorsed by the BCTF.

Pre-Kindergarten: Supports the concept, but is concerned about funding.

Alison McVeigh (School Trustee, Incumbent)

Background: Alison has served three terms as trustee, and is involved with alternative education programs.

Union Policy: Education should be an essential service.

Pre-Kindergarten: Supports the program if funded.

Notes: McVeigh's name has been in the news because of an attempted murder during a teenage party hosted at her house, in which drugs and alcohol were being consumed. She voted for the Stafford reconfiguration.

Kari Medos (School Trustee)

Background: Kari has been involved with the district parent advisory council.

Union Policy: Defer to the provincial government on essential service designation.

Pre-Kindergarten: It is the ministry's decision.

Michael Parker (School Trustee)

Background: Michael is a high school teacher. His responses in questionnaires were brief or non-existent.

Union Policy: Education should not be an essential service.

Pre-Kindergarten: Does not support the concept. Would rather have children learn in non-institutionalized settings.

Karen Petersen (School Trustee)

Background: Middle school teacher and leader with the Girl Guides of Canada.

Union Policy: A compromise should be reached that ensures that students don't suffer.

Pre-Kindergarten: Will consider the plan, but has concerns that children need to learn through play.

Dave Petipas (School Trustee)

Background: Petipas is self-employed, and primarily wants to see a stronger emphasis on technology in the classroom.

Union Policy: Education should be an essential service.

Pre-Kindergarten: Supports it if it proves to be feasible.

Diane Pona (School Trustee)

Background: Has served four terms as trustee in the past. Motivated to run again because of the HD Stafford reconfiguration decision.

Union Policy: Education should not be an essential service. She is endorsed by the BCTF.

Pre-Kindergarten: An exciting program if fully funded.

Rod Ross (School Trustee, Incumbent)

Background: Rod graduated from Trinity Western University and is a founding board member of the Langley School Foundation. He has been a school trustee for 18 years.

Union Policy: Education should be an essential service. He made a point to decline the BCTF's request for an interview for endorsement.

Pre-Kindergarten: Has some concerns about the program. He suggests a small-scale pilot be run first.

Notes: He voted for the HD Stafford reconfiguration.

Graeme Shepherd (School Trustee)

Background: Has been a part of the parent advisory council executive for 12 years.

Union Policy: Education should not be an essential service.

Pre-Kindergarten: Excited about the program, but concerned about funding.

Langley City Municipal Elections November 2008

Candidates for Mayor, Council, and School Board



Peter Fassbender (Mayor, Incumbent)

Background: Fassbender has been mayor of Langley City for the past 3 years. Before that he served as a city councilor for 3 years.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial), Conservative (Federal)

Crime Strategy: Strongly opposed to harm reduction measures.

Notes: Mayor Fassbender has recently refused a business license for a local store called Hempeyz which sells legal marijuana-culture products, saying it doesn't reflect a proper attitude towards drugs. He attends a Pentecostal church and sits on the board of governors of the Western Pentecostal Bible College.



Ron Abgrall (Mayor)

Background: Abgrall is a local automotive mechanic. He plans to run for mayor primarily to highlight the need to preserve public greenspace.

Political alignment: Green (Provincial and Federal)

Crime Strategy: Neutral to harm reduction measures. Critical of Mayor Fassbender's "baseball bat" approach to homelessness

Notes: Does not seem to regard himself as a serious candidate. Rather, he is using the election as a forum for his criticism of the current Council and Mayor.

John Mark Archibald (City Council)

Background: Archibald is a local restaurant manager.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial), Conservative (Federal)

Crime Strategy: Opposed to harm reduction measures. He wants to make city developers responsible to build low-income housing.

Notes: Archibald does not appear to be a serious candidate.

David Hall (City Council)

Background: A local educator, Hall is not satisfied with the status quo with regards to crime and transit.

Political alignment: "Completely independent"

Crime Strategy: Refuses to answer.

Notes: Hall has experience on other city governing boards. He advocates for a less car-centric transportation plan including a light rail transit system. He is adamant that more police are needed.

Jack Arnold (City Council, Incumbent)

Background: Arnold has lived in Langley City for 31 years and has been a councilor for 18 years.

Political alignment: No response

Crime Strategy: The city is already spending enough on police services.

Notes: Arnold appears to have similar policy positions to Mayor Fassbender.

Teri James (City Council, Incumbent)

Background: Coordinator of Downtown Langley Merchants' Association

Political alignment: No Response

Crime Strategy: No Response

Notes: James has worked very hard over many years to ensure the success of the downtown core, and continued that work in her first term as city councilor.

Shannon Assion (City Council)

Background: Assion is a horticulturalist and has lived in Langley City for 12 years. She is campaigning primarily on reducing homelessness and drug trafficking.

Political alignment: NDP (Provincial and Federal)

Crime Strategy: Neutral to harm reduction measures. Wants increased police to fight drug trade.

Quote: "Enough with the old-school, Puritan, small town thinking!"

Darrell Krell (City Council)

Background: Darrell is a tennis coach and city parks trustee, and has lived in Langley City for 13 years.

Political alignment: No Response

Crime Strategy: Neutral to harm reduction measures. He believes that more effective urban planning will help the homeless.

Notes: Krell advocates for a more visible police presence on foot in the downtown area.



Langley City Municipal Elections November 2008

Candidates for Mayor, Council, and School Board

Gayle Martin (City Council, Incumbent)

Background: A longtime city councilor and former president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Political alignment: Liberal (Provincial) Executive in the Federal Liberal riding association.

Crime Strategy: No Response

Notes:

Rudy Storteboom (City Council)

Background: Rudy is a local realtor and was narrowly defeated in the last civic election.

Political alignment: Executive in the Federal Liberal riding association.

Crime Strategy: Strongly opposes harm reduction strategies. Public safety is his "top issue".

Notes:

Paula Clark (City School Trustee)

Background: A mother of 6, she has been involved with local parent advisory councils.

Union Policy: She believes in a compromise.

Pre-Kindergarten: Incoherent response.

Notes: Her responses in the questionnaires indicated she was completely out of her depth.

Stacey Cody (City School Trustee, Incumbent)

Background: Stacey is a founding member of the Langley Literacy Association and has been involved with several other education fundraising efforts.

Union Policy: Contradicts herself when she supports education as an essential service but would not support anything which would remove teachers' collective bargaining rights. Endorsed by the BCTF.

Pre-Kindergarten: Supports the idea if fully funded by the province.

Aaron Fedora (City School Trustee)

Background: Fedora is an entrepreneur, and served as the president of Trinity Western's student body.

Union Policy: Not affiliated with the BCTF.

Pre-Kindergarten: Aaron believes it takes a family to raise a child, and does not support the ministry's plan.

Notes: Fedora advertises that he is young and has no children, and therefore has plenty of energy and time for the position.

Alex Hagen (City School Trustee)

Background: Alex is a parent of two children and takes public education very seriously. His reason for running is to put an end to the school board's divisive politics.

Union Policy: Doesn't have an opinion about labor negotiations.

Pre-Kindergarten: More discussion is needed.

Diana MacNeil (City School Trustee)

Marika Van Dommelin (City Council)

Background: Disabled herself, Marika has been a local advocate for the disabled for many years.

Political alignment: Liberal (provincial and federal)

Crime Strategy: Refuses to answer about harm reduction.

Notes: Currently serves as the Ambassador Program Coordinator. Member of the Rick Hansen Foundation.

Rosemary Wallace (City Council)

Background: Very little information could be found for this candidate. She actively petitioned the school board in opposition to the reconfiguration of HD Stafford Secondary school.

Political alignment: No Response

Crime Strategy: No Response

Notes: Often responded "Don't Know" to questionnaire questions.

Background: Diana has served for 15 years on a parent advisory council. She has not liked what she has seen over the past few years in the school board and therefore has decided to run.

Union Policy: Education should be an essential service.

Pre-Kindergarten: A good idea to get children ready for kindergarten.

Rob McFarlane (City School Trustee)

Background: A board member on the Kiwanis club which helps those with learning disabilities, Rob has also been part of the parent advisory council.

Union Policy: States that "Nothing should diminish the school employees' right to a collective agreement." He has been endorsed by the BCTF.

Pre-Kindergarten: Too little information has been given by the Ministry at this point.

Kirsten Schaffer-Charlesworth (City School Trustee)

Background: Kirsten is running primarily to have a say in the province's proposal for pre-kindergarten classes.

Union Policy: Education should not be an essential service.

Pre-Kindergarten: Has questions about funding, types of classes, and how this affects other grades.