

In West Fargo's city commission race, three residents are seeking one of two seats currently held by Mike Thorstad and Mark Simmons.

Thorstad announced earlier in 2020 he would not seek a fourth term. Simmons is running for re-election along with [Roben Anderson](#), a finance analyst at Doosan Bobcat who currently serves on the West Fargo Special Assessments Committee, and Mandy George, a corporate pilot.

West Fargo city commissioners are elected to at-large, four-year terms. Commissioners are paid an annual salary of \$12,286, according to West Fargo Finance Director Jim Larson.'

All candidates were contacted by The Forum to answer the same five questions through email. They were able to respond to the question with up to 300 characters.

Click (or scroll through) the deck below to read the candidates' answers, which are in their own words and have not been edited.



# Roben Anderson

 Age  
36

 Occupation  
Analyst

 Family  
Wife and two daughters

 Social media  
Facebook



15 2025




Why are you running for the West Fargo City Commission?

"I am running because I want to ensure that there will be a voice of the Resident on the Commission. I see opportunities in many areas where I believe improvements can be made. I want to see the city set up to succeed and be a great place to live for future generations."

What experience will you bring to the seat?

"I'm a father, a data-driven analyst and have served on the Special Assessment Committee since 2018. I've been working with many people to understand specials completely and what it would take to fix the system."

 What two issues do you see as the most pressing to address if elected?

1. Getting our economy up and running again.
2. Property taxes and special assessments. I will support businesses and residents as much as possible, in addition to ensuring the effective use of property taxes and working to fix the special assessment system.

# Roben Anderson

 Age  
36

 Occupation  
Analyst

 Family  
Wife and two daughters

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What unique skills will you bring to the seat?

"With my work experience I've brought unique perspectives to the positions I've held. I dig in to learn as much as possible and help make improvements. I'm deliberative, which means I look at all angles before making a decision, which is useful for a position like City Commissioner."

West Fargo continues to try, recruit and build its commercial base; what do you think is needed in the city?

"I think West Fargo has a lot to offer from a commercial perspective. Building up the commercial base means sales tax that removes the burden from property owners. I would like to see something that is family-oriented like a restaurant with an ice cream parlor, or a soda fountain and a general store."



# Mandy George

 Age  
42

 Occupation  
Corporate Pilot

 Family  
Daughter, Jordyn, 11

 Social media  
Facebook

14 Slides




Why are you running for the West Fargo City Commission?

"Nearly a year ago I started attending commission meetings and became very interested and inspired and decided that I wanted the opportunity to serve myself. I believe that it's a way I can make a direct impact to make the experience of living in West Fargo the best that it can be."

What experience will you bring to the seat?

"I have lived in the Metro area the majority of my life and have been involved with multiple facets of the community from volunteering to having an active child. My pilot training has helped me to look at situations critically and logically in order to make the best decisions possible."

 What two issues do you see as the most pressing to address if elected?

"The top issues by far are the closely linked high cost of both special assessments and property taxes, and the neglected infrastructure in the core areas of West Fargo. We need to focus on needs vs. wants so we can fix infrastructure without raising taxes."

# Mandy George

 Age  
42

 Occupation  
Corporate Pilot

 Family  
Daughter, Jordyn, 11

 Social media  
Facebook

15 Slides



What unique skills will you bring to the seat?

"I have been both a small business owner and an employee. I can understand the issues from both points of view. I am an excellent communicator and listener and I enjoy talking with residents of the community. I will put their needs first and make sure that they feel heard."

West Fargo continues to try, recruit and build its commercial base; what do you think is needed in the city?

"We need to get rid of special assessments, and instead have a low, sustainable, predictable tax fair for everyone. If we aren't killing businesses with taxes, that will be an incentive for businesses to open here. With a low tax rate, businesses will want to open but the staff will want to live in West Fargo as well."



# Mark

# Simmons\*

\*Asterisk denotes incumbent

 Age  
58

 Occupation  
Retired

 Family  
Wife, three children, two grandchildren

 Social media  
Facebook



10/20/2020




Why are you running for the West Fargo City Commission?

"Because I want to see the City continue to move forward in a positive direction. Also, I love being a City Commissioner and love helping people solve there issues. If elected I will continue to make sure that we put safety for our children and community above all."

What experience will you bring to the seat?

"I bring 16 years as a current City Commissioner to the table. With that comes a lot of experience and wisdom. I have learned a lot over the years, and plan on using that experience to move our great city forward."

 What two issues do you see as the most pressing to address if elected?

"Obviously, the first priority is to get through this COVID-19. Once we're through it, we need to make sure our businesses can survive and start to flourish again. This will help us bring our economy back again. We also need to look at ways to bring our property taxes and special assessments down."

# Mark

# Simmons\*

 Age  
58

 Occupation  
Retired

 Family  
Wife, three children, two grandchildren

 Social media  
Facebook



10/20/2020



What unique skills will you bring to the seat?

"As of June 9, the Commission will have four out of the five commissioners with less than two years experience on the board. I feel it's crucial that we have at least one Commissioner with more experience than that!! We need someone on the Commission that communicate what we did in the past, and why."

West Fargo continues to try, recruit and build its commercial base; what do you think is needed in the city?

"We just have to keep plugging away and never give up... We have done a good job over the years taking West Fargo from a neighboring community to a full fledged City. Our tax base has gone from 1 million dollars per year to 12 millions dollars generating much needed revenue."





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