

Dane Dems Endorsement Questionnaire

Thank you for seeking an endorsement from the Dane County Democratic Party. **This questionnaire is due by no later than Friday, January 24, at 11:59 PM.**

You do not need to answer all of the questions below, but please answer all of the ones you feel are pertinent to your campaign and mark the questions you do not feel are pertinent N/A. We will ask more detailed questions and followups during our interview, if we choose to have one, so feel free to answer these questions as briefly or thoroughly as you desire.

These answers will be shared in full with our membership before they vote on your endorsement.

Email *

carolyn2016@yahoo.com

Candidate name *

Carolyn Clow

Position you are running for (include municipality) *

McFarland Village President

Campaign website

<https://www.facebook.com/CarolynClow4McFarlandPresident>

Professional Experience *

Deputy Director - Administration & Finance, Alliant Energy Center of Dane County

Political/Service Experience *

Village Board, 2017-2019, 2020, Village President 2021- present

Why are you running for this seat? *

The Village is no longer small. We are growing rapidly like the rest of Dane County. We need to find ways to hear the voices of all residents and to move our community forward into the new environment we are in. The political climate in the next 4 years will also be challenging. Continuing my leadership in the Village, will allow me to steadily transition the Village into this new era. We are cultivating leadership on our board so we will be more solid in the future.

What are the three most important issues in your race? *

Communication and engagement with the community, growth, particularly east side growth and next steps for our community center are the top issues in my campaign.

What are the largest environmental concerns you aim to deal with in office?

The Village must think about environmental impact with everything that we do. We built the first net-zero Public Safety Center, opened in 2023 and we are under contract with Alliant Energy for a solar array which will make the Village government net zero for energy usage. We are now looking to what energy efficiency efforts we can put into the renovation of our municipal center into a community center and the renovation of our library. We will continue to evaluate our impact as we purchase vehicles and equipment and undertake smaller building projects.

How will you use your position to create more equitable opportunities and help those living in poverty?

McFarland is not connected to Madison by public transportation. We deliver most of our services through our food pantry and through the Village's Senior Outreach department. We are working to bring in more service providers to our Municipal Center now and with a renovation to a community center. We have a lot of room to augment these services. Additionally, we are working to transition the services of our fledgling Youth Center, which is currently a stand-alone non-profit, to a Village Service. We expect to complete this transition by July 1, 2026.

What will you do to address racial inequality, promote restorative justice, and/or address racially biased policing?

The Village of McFarland government largely ignored the role and impact of its work on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. In 2020, following the murder of George Floyd, the youth of our community brought a resolution to the Village Board and the School Board and compelled us to start looking at the work we do as public servants and it's impact on everyone in our community. We now have a DEI Strategist who is helping to lead our initiatives to track and support staff as they address inequities and create opportunities. We have also focused on racial bias in policing. We are currently recruiting a new chief and dedication to eliminating bias and improving community relationships is a major focus of the recruitment. We will have people of color on the evaluation team and the opportunity for community members to meet the finalists, interview them and provide feedback.

How will you improve the public health of our community in your position?

Public health is more the purview of County government but there are things that local governments can do as well to promote public health. The two primary departments we have to impact health - fire/EMS and senior outreach. Our fire/EMS staff are working on community education programs and on partnering with groups outside of village government on the most significant issues they see - fall prevention, drug and alcohol use, mental health supports, dementia support. Senior Outreach is bringing basic health screening services and education to adults 55+ in our community. I have helped the Village to deepen its connection with Stoughton Health who has recently opened an urgent care in the Village and is very interested in providing education and services to support positive health behaviors in our community.

What are the largest transportation issues you wish to work on and how will you address them?

We would love to work on transportation issues as we know they are critically important to supporting people who cannot access personal transportation and to reduce climate impacts. We will continue to monitor options for transportation but at a local level, it will be nearly impossible to fund expansion of bus transportation into our community with the current funding constraints. We are continually improving bike and pedestrian connectivity in the community.

How have you elevated diverse voices in government and public discourse? How would you continue to do so if elected to this office?

I have worked hard to recruit and support diverse candidates for Village Board and School Board positions. During my training in Emerge Wisconsin, we talked about the importance of asking good candidates to run and the need to ask more than once and to continue to support them. Additionally, I have recruited and supported community members participation on Village Committees. The committee opportunity is both a big step in getting involved with Village government and potentially, a pathway to running for Village Board. These opportunities are crucial for helping people learn about and connect with government so they can engage and affect change. Finally, I have worked to make our board room more welcoming to anyone who chooses to attend a meeting and provide comment. We work for our community and they must feel welcome in the space where we hold our meetings. This is the entry level step to having people become engaged. I am committed helping people connect with and impact their government for the remainder of my life whether or not I am Village President.

Any other issues/topics you wish to discuss?

The current political climate is discouraging, exhausting and at times vicious for elected officials at all levels. The support of the Democratic party and connections with like-minded elected officials and non-elected community members was always important and will be critically important in this time. Thank you for all the work you do. It matters.

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