

The Jordan Journal

2024 ELECTION

Robert Whipps seeking third term to Jordan City Council

Robert C. Whipps is seeking a third term to the Jordan City Council this November. He was first elected in 2016, and was re-elected again in 2020. Whipps grew up in Jordan, and after completing law school and marrying his wife Stephanie, they returned to Jordan to start their family. They have three children, Lincoln, 6, Luella, 4, and Olivia, 2. Whipps is currently employed as an Assistant Le Sueur County Attorney.



Robert Whipps

If elected, what background, experience or skills can you bring to the table to benefit the position and community?

I work as an Assistant Le Sueur County Attorney, a city attorney for Montgomery, and work in the private practice of law. I have been a member of the Jordan Fire Department for 6+ years.

Is there anything you think the city needs or areas that could be improved?

The city is doing a great job. We continue to offer new amenities. Our growth is outpacing our spending which has led to a reduced tax rate. The 169 Interchange will be a welcome addition and should foster further commercial growth opportunities.

If elected, how would you engage or communicate with residents to ensure their voices are heard at the council table?

I am regularly around town and have many interactions in person. I encourage people with issues to attend our meetings or send me an email.

What made you want to run for city council?

I have eight years of experience on council. I add value and a unique perspective to the council. I am financially conservative, question spending, and use my vote to keep our community's taxes low.

I am a critical thinker and try to examine issues from each side's perspective. I am not afraid to speak up on difficult issues or say "no" when it is required. At the end of the day, I try my best to use my vote for what I believe is in the best interest of our community.

Q&A with Jordan City Council candidate Jonathan Pho

Jonathan Pho, a 12-year resident of Jordan, is running for Jordan City Council this November.

Pho said he is running to give back to the community and "help represent our residents in the next phase of our growth in Jordan."

"We have been rapidly growing the last few years and it shows with the growth in our schools and the growth of businesses and construction happening in our city," Pho said. "So my goal is to help bring the goals and concerns of the residents and businesses in our city to the table."



Jonathan Pho

Is there anything you think the city needs or areas that could be improved?

We could do better at attracting new businesses whether it's restaurants or retail. It would help attract visitors and keep our residents within our town without always having to leave town to get what they need. I would love to see our downtown area get a little more foot traffic and it would be good for our city as a whole.

If elected, how would you engage or communicate with residents to ensure their voices are heard at the council table?

I'm a very approachable person whether it's at a community event if I'm just out and about running errands. I welcome people approaching me. Outside of those events residents are welcome to email me or set up a time to meet with me. I will take the time to make sure we can meet because we all live in this city and we all should work together to meet our goals of making our city the best it can be.

If elected, what background, experience or skills can you bring to the table to benefit the position and community?

My background in IT as a software engineer could be helpful in how we analyze our goals and concerns. I'm used to having to look at the full picture before making rash decisions and then having to communicate our decisions across all stakeholders concerned. My goal would be to communicate how we came to our decisions and make sure the community understands why we made the decision we did.

Q&A with Casey Shannon, Jordan City Council candidate

Casey Shannon is running for Jordan City Council. Shannon has been a resident of Scott County for more than 20 years, and has lived in Jordan for the past two years.

What made you want to run for city council?

I want to make a meaningful difference in our community. I've come to really appreciate the unique character of Jordan and believe my experience can contribute to its continued growth and improvement.

If elected, what background, experience or skills can you bring to the table to benefit the position and community?

I bring a strong background in business, project management, and IT leadership. With over 20 years of experience managing teams, budgets, and technology solutions, I am confident that my skills in problem-solving, strategic planning, and decision-making would help Jordan navigate its future challenges and opportunities.

Is there anything you think the city needs or areas that could be improved?

One of my primary concerns is ensuring responsible spending of taxpayer money. I believe in being fiscally responsible while still investing in areas that will enhance the quality of life for Jordan residents. We need to prioritize projects that deliver long-term benefits to the community with minimal usage of TIF (Tax Increment Financing) and tax increases.

If elected, how would you engage or communicate with residents to ensure their voices are heard at the council table?

I plan to maintain an active online presence, providing a dedicated webpage where residents can easily find city updates, contact information, and submit their concerns or suggestions. Additionally, I plan to hold regular in-person meetings to stay connected with the community and ensure open lines of communication.



Casey Shannon

Jan Gilmer joins council race to find out "what makes this city tick"

Gilmer has lived in Jordan for 22 years, and is running because she wants to "know what makes this city tick."

"When we moved to the City of Jordan, I wanted to learn more about the city and was lucky to be appointed to the Planning Commission. It gave me a reason to learn the streets in our community because I'd go out to look at a property related to inquiries or requests for variances and such. As my career required more travel, I didn't run for a second term. However, now that I'm retired, I have the time and am available to research, review and invest in our city," Gilmer said.

If elected, what background, experience or skills can you bring to the table to benefit the position and community?

I started my career as a temporary receptionist, knowing nothing about the industry I was stepping into. Fast forward to my retirement as a Senior Business Consultant, I recognize and respect each person and position it takes to grow professionally and to get a project successfully completed.

My experience includes implementation of new services, training of new services and consulting on workflows, project management, research and resolution or potentially research that results in designing a customized solution working in collaboration with the

client. My position required that a be a good listener, to be able to recognize many facets of a situation to identify a solution, to hold or attend meetings where it was important to work with others to agree on a strategy to get to the desired result, to manage tasks from multiple people, multiple departments and sometimes additional third party vendors; all in the goal of completing a successful project in a timely and positive manner.

I think the city runs very similar to a business, with the city council providing the guidance to city staff based on resident input and established ordinances and procedures.

Is there anything you think the city needs or areas that could be improved?

I have been attending the Jordan City Council, Planning Commission and Park and Recreation meetings for the city of Jordan on a regular basis for at least the last year and a half or more. I was attending mainly for an informational purpose. I want to understand how our city works.

Sitting there listening to the discussions makes me want to help improve communication. When we had our own newspaper, the Jordan Independent, some of the topics would become stories in the paper. However, I felt there is always a side of the story that was in a previous article or missed or perhaps not heard.

Sitting in the front row at the meet-

ings, I often find it difficult to hear what is being said amongst council members and listening to a meeting online is even more difficult to hear the discussions.

There is a limit to public comment of three minutes per person and that comment period is not necessarily going to garner a solution from the council but simply an acknowledgement of the public's comment.

I feel our residents are an often overlooked asset of the city. We have all generations; those who have lived it and have the wisdom of experience; those who bring new ideas and technologies to the table and even those who are just trying to keep up with the daily heartbeat. They each deserve to be heard and have their concerns responded to either by city staff or city council in a timely and professional manner.

Additionally, without a local newspaper, the city needs to find a solution for providing information to the residents of all generations, which means hardcopy in some cases. We certainly can't isolate residents from information just because they don't log into a computer. We need a solution for making city news public news to everyone.

My other concerns are with Annexation and Business Growth. Jordan needs orderly annexation agreements to grow their commercial and industrial businesses. We need the full support and backing of Scott County, along

with annexation agreements with the townships. Unfortunately, recent decisions by Scott County have put Jordan in an unfavorable situation with the anticipated growth boundaries and the townships, which at this time affects our industrial/commercial growth. I feel this issue is as important, if not more important, than the 169/282 interchange.

Not being a business owner and not being employed in the city, I don't understand why Jordan has a reputation of being "difficult to work" with as a new business coming into Jordan or an established business. I know the city offers incentives for new businesses, such as TIFS, and the EDA has created programs to assist with enrichments of property, signage and the like for existing businesses. I'd like to find the source of that reputation and address it so we can work toward a solution and an easier path for business growth.

Perhaps post-mortem reviews of each application being submitted should be made to recognize where there are challenges or mistakes that can be addressed. We all learn when we recognize concerns or issues that should have been addressed differently.

If elected, how would you engage or communicate with residents to ensure their voices are heard at the council table?