**April 6**

**Candidates for Mayor**

[**J. William Reynolds**](https://www.jwilliamreynolds.org/) [**Dana Grubb**](https://www.danagrubbformayor.com/)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cityness**  Lifelong resident, Liberty High School and Moravian College graduate. | **Cityness**  Lifelong resident, Liberty High School and Moravian College graduate. |
| **Occupation**  High school teacher, City Councilman | **Occupation**  Small business owner, photojournalist |
| **Relevant city experience**  City Councilman since 2007, president of Council | **Relevant city experience**  27 years working for the City in such various management positions as Deputy Director of Community Development and Acting Director of Community and Economic Development |
| **Endorsements**  U.S. Congresswoman Susan Wild; Councilwoman Crampsie Smith, Councilwoman Paige Van Wirt | **Endorsements**  Former City Councilpersons, City administrators, and co-workers; Gracie Grubb |
| **Neighborhood investment**  “Our neighborhoods are our most valuable asset as a community.  Since 2018, we have worked to create Northside 2027 - a comprehensive initiative designed to invest in our north side neighborhoods that surround William Penn and Thomas Jefferson Elementary schools.  Working with the Bethlehem Area School District, Moravian College, residents, and small businesses, a master plan has been completed to design and implement significant improvement in these neighborhoods. The improvements are focused on issues related to housing, transportation, recreation, access to social services, and the vitality of our commercial corridors. NorthSide 2027 stands as an example of how we can build broad coalitions dedicated to investing in and further developing our neighborhoods. You can view our NorthSide 2027 plan [here.](https://www.northside2027.org)” | **Housing**  “Housing availability, with an emphasis on resident-ownership and affordability, must be addressed. The current trend of developing upscale rental housing does not satisfy the housing needs in a diverse community like Bethlehem. There is a shortage of affordable housing (not public housing) for working and middle class families. We need to create such housing opportunities, so that families like the one I grew up in, in a NE Bethlehem row home, can have good houses and great communities in which to thrive and prosper. This will bring stability to Bethlehem’s neighborhoods**.**I will form a city-wide affordable housing task force, an initiative long needed in Bethlehem.” |
|  | **Public Service**  “Public service is an attitude as well as a commitment, and poor morale among city workers affects how well services are delivered to the community. I believe that the first challenge of the next mayor will be to rebuild the morale of the city workforce. Reorganization and streamlining will ensure better relationships among coworkers and better interaction with and service to the public. An atmosphere tainted by personal agendas can destroy cooperation among departments, bankrupt the treatment of those seeking assistance, and disgruntle the overall attitude of city hall employees. Far too many residents, developers, contractors, realtors and business owners have expressed their dissatisfaction with a non-responsive city government, and fartoo many instances of fearful, tense and depressed conditionswithin city hall have been reported. The city workforce is the single most important asset that the public and the mayor have: a respected and content workforce will deliver better services.” |
| **Building a sustainable community**  “From my first days on City Council, I have worked to support Bethlehem’s commitment to protecting our environment and creating a more sustainable city.  I am proud to have proposed and led the creation of Bethlehem’s first Climate Action Plan (CAP). Utilizing the expertise of citizens, local environmental advocacy groups, our Environmental Advisory Council, and city employees, our CAP includes citywide energy reduction goals, legislative policy recommendations, and mitigation strategies for vulnerable areas of our city. Our CAP has also created a permanent structure of citizens and local environmental groups that will remain engaged and able to advocate for a more sustainable Bethlehem moving forward. Bethlehem’s Climate Action Plan is available [here.](https://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/Public-Works/Climate-Action-Plan)” | **Environment**  “Environmental concerns, both in city government operations and in the community, must remain a priority. The Climate Action Plan should continue to be a roadmap for improving our city environment and remain a working document. The city, in partnership with the Parking Authority, should continue to add electric charging stations. In addition, where feasible, the city fleet should be converted to alternative fuel. Revisions to the Zoning Code need to be made to encourage solar installation and green roofs on larger new buildings. The installation of electric charging stations at warehouses, powered by solar panels, would provide electricity for off-street parking charging stations for the many trucks traversing our city streets, and reduce their diesel engine idling.” |
|  | **Small Business Assistance**  “Small businesses are the backbone of our local retail, restaurant, commercial and service sector. I understand many of the concerns that other small business owners have expressed to me. Small businesses are a critical part of our community’s economic vitality, and city government needs to recommit to providing assistance to current and prospective small businesses in Bethlehem. My administration will create a ‘small business concierge’ to do exactly that.” |
| **Economic development**  “While cities and other municipalities around us struggle to balance their budget, the City of Bethlehem has made great strides in improving its fiscal health.  Throughout Pennsylvania, Bethlehem’s financial position is second to none. We currently possess a bond rating of A+ with a stable outlook.  The improved bond rating is a reflection of both the city’s financial health and the hard work we have done as a community to help guarantee a bright economic future for Bethlehem.  Our success can be attributed to our commitment to fiscal responsibility and support of economic revitalization efforts throughout our city.  We must stay committed to these priorities if we are to maintain our strong financial position. Our latest independent financial audit can be accessed [here.](https://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/Meet-Your-Government/Budget-and-Audits)” | **Community Development**  “Community development has played second fiddle to economic development for too many years. Make no mistake, we must continue to expand the tax base with economic development, but we need to ensure that development in a city steeped in history respects and is compatible with that history and the neighborhoods in which it takes place**.”** |
|  | **Public Safety**  “Public safety will be at the forefront of city services. I believe that a robust community policing program strengthens relationships between residents and law enforcement and builds trust. Training in both traditional law enforcement disciplines as well as newer applications will ensure that every resident can trust the Bethlehem Police Department to apply the law equally, to everyone, at all times. Our Police Department, Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services will receive the resources and support that are required to protect residents, businesses and visitors**.”** |
| **Fiscal health**  “While cities and other municipalities around us struggle to balance their budget, the City of Bethlehem has made great strides in improving its fiscal health.  Throughout Pennsylvania, Bethlehem’s financial position is second to none. We currently possess a bond rating of A+ with a stable outlook.  The improved bond rating is a reflection of both the city’s financial health and the hard work we have done as a community to help guarantee a bright economic future for Bethlehem.  Our success can be attributed to our commitment to fiscal responsibility and support of economic revitalization efforts throughout our city.  We must stay committed to these priorities if we are to maintain our strong financial position. Our latest independent financial audit can be accessed [here.](https://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/Meet-Your-Government/Budget-and-Audits)” |  |
|  | **Ordinances & Code Enforcement**  When city ordinances are not enforced equilaterally and fairly, the entire community suffers. Code enforcement officials should not be choosing on whom and when they enforce city regulations. Code enforcement exists to ensure safe housing, building code compliant practices in new construction, and adherence to zoning laws. As the former Deputy Director of Community Development, I recognize code enforcement’s importance to the health and welfare of a community. Residents may be assured that I believe in robust code enforcement.” |
| **Open, responsive City government**  "I am proud to have proposed and created Open Bethlehem – our city’s first open data program.  Open data allows citizens access to data related to local government, our community, and our neighborhoods. People throughout the country, when given access to government collected data, have found innovative and creative uses for the data that improve their community. Some applications of city open data initiatives include the tracking of budget revenue and projections, the efficiency of city services, health and code violations, police department statistics, and economic investment information. Bethlehem’s open data program has the potential to transform the ways in which citizens are able to access and utilize public data in an effort to improve our community. Bethlehem’s Open Data portal can be viewed [here.](https://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/Quicklinks/Open-Bethlehem)” | **Integrity & Honesty**  “Mayor is only as good as the integrity and honesty that they bring to the office. Open office hours for the public to speak with the Mayor will continue. City business will be transacted transparently andopenly. I will notparticipate in the employee pension plan as Mayor, and I will use my own personal vehicle for city business. My desire to be your Mayor, and my decision to run is purely from a desire to solve issues, serve and improve both the City itself and the quality of life for its citizens, businesses and visitors**.”** |
|  | **Ethics**  Comprehensive ethics ordinance |
| **Accountability**  “Locally and across the nation, economic development incentives have provided no shortage of controversy over the past several years. Supporters consider them a valuable tool to redevelop and revitalize areas that are in desperate need of investment. Detractors believe economic development programs too often represent corporate giveaways or are destructive of conditions that are worth preserving or fostering. I proposed and wrote our Financial Accountability Incentive Reporting (F.A.I.R.) law which tracks economic development incentive data as it relates to the City’s current economic development programs. Passed unanimously by City Council and implemented in 2018, F.A.I.R. helps to answer questions about the value of our incentive programs. F.A.I.R. also provides evidence and information for future discussions about economic development strategies. Bethlehem’s FAIR program can be viewed [here.](https://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/Community-Economic-Development/Economic-Development-Start-a-Business/F-A-I-R)” |  |
|  | **Recreation & Parks**  “Recreation and Parks are important to quality of life in any community, and in light of the pandemic, these resources have been in even higher demand. Our recreational and natural resources, as well as public facilities need more attention; dissolving the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Property was misguided, and maintenance of our parks, playgrounds and city facilities has suffered as a result. Monocacy Park and the Monocacy Walkway, the D&L Towpath, Sand Island and Saucon Park are prime current examples of poor maintenance**.** Rolling the Department of Sewer and Water back into the Department of Public Works will enable the re-establishment of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Public Property, and create a renewed focus on these critical resources.” |
| **A community of fairness and equity**  “As a city, we must be dedicated to building a community centered on the ideals of equity and fairness. One of my proudest moments on City Council was when we voted to create the City’s Human Relations Commission (HRC). The HRC was created to guard against discrimination as it relates to housing, employment and public accommodations in Bethlehem. I have also worked to increase internet access for our residents, design city initiatives to be structured to include traditionally underrepresented communities, and guaranteed every resident has the same access to basic city services.” |  |
|  | **Public Works & Streets**  “Many Bethlehem residents are dissatisfied with the condition of our roadways as well as other systems under the aegis of Public Works and Streets. Laying a scratch coat of macadam on a deteriorating surface is a waste of money. A street should be repaved properly and done right the first time.” |
| **Advocate for issues that matter**  “Our local government often relies on state and federal government support to accomplish many of our priorities and goals as a city. With that in mind, elected officials at the local level need to be strong advocates for issues that affect their communities. With that in mind, I will continue to work with our state and federal officials on issues that are important to our citizens, including raising the minimum wage, reforming our health care system, and increasing our investments in public education.” |  |
|  | **Parking Authority Reform**  “Bethlehem needs a kinder, gentler parking authority. Many residents and small business owners feel that the Bethlehem Parking Authority is not approachable, and as a result is out of touch with the community that they are attempting toserve. I will address this and will consider moving the day to day operation into city hall, with the Parking Authority operating solely as the financing arm of that operation. This would give residents and business owners recourse through their elected representatives.” |