

**Q3: Opening and running a business can be a challenging, time consuming task for any individual. What will you do to support entrepreneurs and business owners to help them interact with the city as efficiently as possible?**

## CITY COMMISSION CANDIDATE

### **Tim Werner:**

- Clear, direct, and transparent decision making by the City Commission
- Fully support fiber to the premises, and implement the project in a timely manner
- Attend and promote informal interactions between the business community and members of the City Commission. Such interactions promote the exchange of ideas, and foster improved communication.

**Gary Howe:** An unexpected joy of serving as a Commissioner is being able to connect people to the people, ideas, and processes that help them achieve their dreams. Sometimes it is as simple as introducing someone to the zoning administrator, or an entrepreneur to a local resource to help their business concept take flight. If re-elected, I will continue to be a bridge between economic and social entrepreneurs and the City, as well as members of the community of all kinds who are willing to have a voice in the City's future.

On the policy side, it's important to have leadership that is positive and focused on finding a way to say yes -- as often as possible, and sooner rather than later. I was part of the discussions that led to the well-thought-out food truck policy in Traverse City. The City almost said No to now thriving businesses like The Little Fleet. But with thoughtful leadership, instead of saying No, we developed an ordinance that has been a catalyst to economic development, revitalizing the east end of Front Street and fomenting the cascading benefits of positive social connections.

Traverse City deserves pragmatic, optimistic leadership that is committed to finding innovative ways to encourage new business opportunities. Some of my greatest successes have been in this area, I am passionate about it, and I hope to continue contributing in these areas for the next four years.

**Michele Howard:** As a librarian, I am constantly helping patrons find the resources they need to answer their research questions. Much in the same way, I see businesses and residents as the patrons of our City services. It is important for the City to have streamlined application processes and common sense regulations. Codes need to be understandable and user friendly. Where that is not possible, then the City needs to develop good guidance materials to provide businesses and residents with the resources they need to interact efficiently and effectively with the city. I think good communication is critical – we must actively engage our current businesses when seeking new ideas and we must be open-minded to those new ideas. A commissioner's job is to be a good listener and work with partners like the Chamber to figure out what we need to do in order to provide streamlined and efficient services to our business owners.

**Brian McGillivray:** Navigating any large agency is not always the simplest task, but city staff, on a whole, are pretty responsive group. The city employs specialists in the DDA and from the county to assist and recruit new businesses. As a city commissioner I would push for more emphasis on recruitment of more diverse business interests.

**Jeff Leonhardt:** Opening and running a business is a challenge and I hope organizations like the Chamber and Score are working to help and educate those that take on the risk. We need risk takers but ultimately opening a business is risky. My question for the Chamber and businesses is what are they doing to get involved with city? What are businesses doing? Why not provide parking for employees, increase wages, and make living and working in the city easier and more affordable. I think it is the cities job to provide the infrastructure, organization, livability, and safety and wellbeing of the people here. All of these things are supporting businesses. Business owners need a well maintained, clean and orderly city to do well. I think if the city can do its job well, that benefits businesses. What more can be asked?