

Rock County Supervisor District 4—responses to League of Women Voters - Janesville questions.

Spring Election – April 3, 2018

Candidates: Mary Mawhinney, Tracy Thompson

1. What are your views on the county's responsibility toward at risk children and youth, particularly those in foster care and juvenile justice facilities?

Mary Mawhinney Our responsibility is to provide care, treatment and services to families that have children in out of home placements. Providing these services help to bring families back together with safety being a main goal. Providing adequate service to youth and families can reduce the time in care or return to care. There are many factors that lead to out of home placement: drug abuse, domestic violence, poverty, unemployment and homelessness. The county continues to provide the needed services and continues to monitor the programs. Providing education, meeting basic needs and having appropriate services with the community are ways to help reduce placements.

Tracy Thompson: As the number of adults becoming addicted to heroin and opioids continues to increase, so does the number of child victims -children becoming at risk, entering the foster home system or the juvenile justice system. Realizing these children are in these situations at no fault of their own, they become the responsibility of the community. As a County, it is our duty to stop the cycle and work to help these children – to keep them out of the criminal justice system, treat their trauma, provide basic housing, food, and healthcare services, and to educate them. It becomes our duty as a community to set them on the path toward becoming successful and productive adults with a future right here in Rock County. With foster children and detained children alike, we have an opportunity to educate the public, empower individuals to gain skills needed to help these traumatized children, and create focused programs that recognize the root cause of their situation, and then support the child's specific needs throughout adolescence. And local government must remember that foster homes are among us; in residential homes scattered throughout the County, owned and operated usually by a single family. As such, we must ensure that these homes are not burdened by over-reaching or un-necessary regulation, and empower more families to step-up for a child in need.

2. What is the County's role in supporting evidence-based policies and practices in treating mentally ill and/or addicted individuals and their families?

Tracy Thompson: The County has an important role in supporting evidence-based policies and practices in treating mentally ill and addicted individuals and their families. Policy makers at all levels of local government must be educated about these illnesses, their associated EVP's, and use that information to develop local policy and services that facilitate positive outcomes for those affected. EVP's are the result of long-term studies of specific public health issues, done by specialists in those fields; to help non-specialists (policy makers) make informed decisions about complicated issues. It is the responsibility of local leaders to learn and understand the findings, consider the impact to the programs and committees they're responsible for, collaborate with other programs and committees, and embrace new ideas for the treatment of substance abuse and mental health issues.

Mary Mawhinney: Rock County has become a leader in enacting improvements to the criminal justice system through its participation in the Evidence Based Decision Making (EBDM). EBDM is defined as using data and research to inform and guide decision making across the justice system and focuses on the following goals to improve the criminal justice system:

Reduce harm, improve public safety and improve quality of life

Promote fairness and equal treatment

Use resources effectively

The following comes from the Rock County Score card of the criminal justice system

Evidence-Based Decision Making Core Principles Guiding Rock County Justice System

Professional Judgement of criminal justice system decision makers is enhanced when informed by evidence-based knowledge.

Every interaction within the criminal justice system offers an opportunity to harm reduction.

Systems achieve better outcomes when they operate collaboratively

The system will continually learn and improve when professionals make decisions based on the collection, analysis, and use of data.

3. Indicate why the residents should elect you to represent the 4th Rock Co. district

Mary Mawhinney: Our family has been in the community for over 100 years, recognized as a Century Farm in 2005 by the State of Wisconsin for continuous family ownership of a working farm.

Being a member of the Rock County Board of Supervisors I feel I provide a strong voice for the rural community and the family farm.

As the District 4 representative I will listen to concerns from the entire county, the- wellbeing of the entire county is important to me, as I consider it my home.

Below are some key roles that have built a wealth of experience to draw on that I will use to work for you as your District 4 Representative.

Rock County Board of Supervisors

- Current Chair of Finance Committee
- Current Vice Chair of Planning and Development
- Staff Committee
- Member of the review committee to update the software for agendas and minutes to maintain open record standards.
- Former Vice Chair of General Services
- Former Representative to the Koshkonong Lake District Board.

Wisconsin Counties Association

Agriculture, Environment & Land Use Steering Committee

Taxation & Finance Steering Committee

Town of Johnstown- Town Clerk

- Secretary to the Johnstown Planning and Zoning Committee

Wisconsin Towns Association - Rock County Unit - Former Secretary

Milton School Board (Former)

Community Involvement

- Lifetime member of the Milton FFA Alumni
- Milton FFA Scholarship Donor
- Rock County Fur and Feather buyer of District 4 4-H & FFA members animals
- Lifetime member of Friends of Carver Roehl Park
- Rock Multi Use Trail Group Inc. member

Tracy Thompson: Originally from SW Wisconsin, I have now lived in Rock County for the last 8 years. I'm a farmer, a wetland restoration project manager, and former small business owner. I have also closely followed

the issues at both County and Township levels. I get how local government affects our everyday lives. Working closely with both landowners and regulators in my line of work has given me knowledge, understanding, and skills in navigating complex processes, collaborating with stakeholders in identifying needs and issues, and clearly communicating to achieve shared goals. As County Supervisor, I will put to use my values of hard work and selflessness. I intend to bring my passionate, pragmatic, and collaborative work ethic to the Rock County Board. Fresh, bold ideas are needed to solve the largest issues facing Rock County. I support re-focusing frivolous spending toward what's really needed by Rock County residents. We need treatment & prevention over incarceration for addicts and first-time non-violent offenders. We must protect our valuable soil and water. We need to create a marketplace for farmers seeking new opportunities. We need a fresh voice at the table. For years I have volunteered my time and energy to many important groups and causes; writing letters, collecting for food and clothing drives, serving at hot kitchens, talking to elected officials and hosting community forums to engage learning and conversation. I am ready to bring my motivation and resourcefulness to work for you as County Supervisor.