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City Council hopefuls sound off

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

HIGHLAND HEIGHTS - The citizens of Highland Heights have a field of seven candidates to fill their six-seat city council.

Two of the candidates of the suburban city of about 6,500 think the area is slipping toward blight.

Gary Chinn is a 56-year-old sales rep who has lived in the community for 30 years. He previously served three years on the Parks and Recreation Board.

ADVERTISEMENT "Rental property is not being taken care of. There's vacant homes. There is an ordinance that needs to be enforced," Chinn said.

Sandra L. Shaw is a 52-year-old retired manager from ATT. She has lived in Highland Heights for 20 years and has been director of the Parks and Recreation Board since 1999.

"This is a wonderful city with a great location. There's abandoned cars, abandoned houses and no one is doing anything about it. I'd like to see enforcement of the codes," Shaw said.

Rose Pfaff, 65, is a retired archeologist who has served on council for the past four years.

"I would like to continue to do some beautification work on the public grounds," said Pfaff.

Gene White, 58, has served on council 12 of the 16 years he has lived in Highland Heights. He is a retired plumbing superintendent.

"I want to continue our street-improvement and street-replacement program," said White. "We repair and replace streets at no cost to our citizens. We put in new concrete curb and gutter and storm-water control and sidewalks sometimes and continue our low city taxes."

The city's economy is dominated by Northern Kentucky University, which will add a new arena and conference center in the new few years.

Rene Heinrich, 33, is an attorney who has lived in the city for six years. Heinrich has previously served on the Planning and Zoning Commission and is a former member of the Board of Adjustments.

"Over the next several years there's going to be a lot of growth and changes," Heinrich said. "It's really important to get people on the city council that are astute enough to see the long-term effects of what's going to happen. It's important to work with NKU but also to recognize that as citizens we don't necessarily have the same opinions."

Steve Lehman, 49, is a manufacturing manager and volunteer fire department captain who has served four years on council.

"I would like to stay on council to get a better tax base so we don't have to keep raising property taxes," Lehman said.

Harold Blocher II, 54, has lived in Highland Heights all but 18 months of his life and works as a communications specialist.

"We need to improve in-house communications and the council and departments," said Blocher. He believes this is especially important as NKU grows.

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