

# READER



## CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE 2023

Compiled by Zach Hagadone, Soncirey Mitchell and Ben Olson

1. Why are you running for mayor?

2. What would be your top three priorities if elected?

3. What do you see as the No. 1 challenge facing Sandpoint, and how do you propose to address it?

4. It's no secret that many people in the community feel City Hall is disconnected from what actually affects residents and have doubts about the equitable stewardship of their town on a number of fronts. If elected, how will you speak to these concerns and chart a path forward that a majority of citizens feel is in their best interests?

### Sandpoint City Council

#### Grant Simmons



**Age:** 50

**Birthplace and residence:** Colorado/Sandpoint

**How many years lived in Bonner Co.:** 16

**Past/current government service (if applicable):** current Sandpoint Planning and Zoning Commission member, Bonner General Health Foundation Board member (five years), prior pilot in the U.S. Air Force Foundry

**Profession:** vice president, Kochava

**Education:** B.S. systems engineering/political science/Arabic, U.S. Air Force Academy (1995); M.B.A., University of Idaho

**Contact info:** 720-491-8931, brandedfire@gmail.com, rb.gy/xn548

1. My motivations for running for office are rooted in family and opportunity. Sandpoint has been a nurturing haven for my three children, each in different stages of their schooling — elementary, middle and high school. As the only candidate with school-aged children, I have a firsthand perspective of our educational system and the community's future through their eyes. I've built my career here and desire for others to experience similar opportunities. I believe every family should enjoy what Sandpoint has offered mine, and I am committed to ensuring it remains a harmonious blend of personal growth, community involvement and professional success.

2. a. First, housing affordability is paramount to ensure families of all sizes and backgrounds can call Sandpoint home.

b. Next, I prioritize infrastructure and strategic growth, ensuring our town evolves gracefully, keeping in mind the needs of our school-going population.

c. Lastly, I emphasize the preservation of Sandpoint's unique identity. As we progress, our community spirit, values and culture should remain intact — especially for the generations to come.

3. The delicate balance between Sandpoint's growth and maintaining its core essence is our most pressing challenge. As a parent and active community member, I see the risk of our town being overshadowed as just a resort community. My solution involves fostering dialogues involving residents, businesses, educators and young students. By harnessing collective insights, we can ensure growth without compromising Sandpoint's heart and soul.

4. Trust and relatability are foundational. I understand the feelings of disconnection, as I too navigate the challenges and joys of raising a family here. By regularly hosting community forums and actively engaging with families and students, I intend to bring the concerns of our younger generation to the forefront. My goal is to unite City Hall with our residents' aspirations, ensuring decisions are made with every age group in mind. Through consistent interaction and a focus on the future of our children, we can steer Sandpoint in a direction that resonates with the dreams of all its residents.