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Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Announces Common Council Endorsements

(MADISON, WIS.) – For the first time in its 54-year history, the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce is endorsing candidates for the Madison Common Council. The endorsements were publicly announced today by GMCC President, Jennifer Alexander.

“With almost half of the current Alders choosing to not seek re-election, our members recognized a great opportunity to influence the overall mindset of the Council,” said Alexander.

Since this is the first time that GMCC has decided to endorse candidates, several criteria were established to determine eligibility for endorsement. The first phase of the endorsement process involved mailing questionnaires to the 46 candidates running for Common Council. After receiving the completed responses from candidates, the questionnaires were analyzed for consistency with GMCC positions. Selected candidates were then invited to endorsement interviews.

“Our members saw the value in their past involvement fighting policies such as the lobbying ordinance and mandatory paid sick leave,” noted Alexander. “By endorsing candidates we’re taking a proactive step to positively influence policies in the future.”

GMCC Executive Vice President, Delora Newton, explained that endorsements were not made in every race, in some cases because a district has more than one candidate that met the criteria for endorsement.

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“In some races, like District 19, we have two very qualified candidates who understand the importance of encouraging entrepreneurship and building a positive relationship with the business community,” said Newton. “In other races, none of the candidates running would consistently support GMCC positions.”

Newton continued, “The common characteristic that all of the endorsed candidates share is a knowledge and understanding of the importance a positive business climate brings to the City of Madison.”

The following candidates received GMCC endorsement:

- District 1 – Jed Sanborn
- District 3 – Lauren Cnare
- District 5 – Troy Thiel
- District 7 – Zach Brandon
- District 9 – Paul Skidmore
- District 12 – Mark Deadman
- District 14 – Tim Bruer
- District 16 – Judy Compton
- District 17 – Joe Clausius
- District 18 – Michael Schumacher
- District 20 – Thuy Pham-Remmele

Alexander says the next step is to raise awareness and educate the public about the candidates and what they can do to get involved.

“Our goal for this election is to educate the voters on the candidates and their positions on issues that shape the business climate in Madison,” said Alexander. “I think you’re going to see the business community more involved in the elections – and it’s only going to grow.”

To meet this goal, GMCC created a page on their website devoted entirely to the Spring Elections. The site is a one-stop shop for the general public to view all of the returned candidate responses in their entirety, as well as have access to general voting-related information, such as absentee ballot requests and links to the City Clerk’s webpage to find out what Aldermanic District they reside in.

“Overall, the response has been tremendous from our members, with several members of the GMCC Board of Directors and the Small Business Advisory Council (SBAC) participating in the endorsement interviews,” said Alexander. “We’re excited about our candidates and continuing our mission of positioning the Greater Madison Area as a globally competitive place to live, work, play and do business.”

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