WAUKESHA

Two newcomers announce bid for 11th aldermanic district seat

Seeking downtown Waukesha seat in April election

By Nikki Brahm
nbrahm@conleynet.com
262-513-2651

Halvensleben   **Spencer**

WAUKESHA — Two political newcomers in Waukesha are planning to run for the District 11 Waukesha aldermanic seat in April 2022 — the seat that covers downtown Waukesha.

The seat is currently held by Incumbent Leonard Miller, who also has filed candidacy papers with the city clerk, according to the Waukesha Clerk's Office. Miller did not return a request for comment from The Freeman prior to deadline Wednesday evening.

New candidates may file candidacy papers in the future. The Freeman will have updates of the race as the election gets closer.

Alicia Halvensleben

Alicia Halvensleben, who is originally from Milwaukee, has lived in Waukesha for about eight years in the downtown area and has lived in District 11 for six years.

Halvensleben said she decided to run for the seat because she was approached by several community members who encouraged her to run. Halvensleben said she is pretty involved downtown, taking part in Friday Night Live, Art Crawls, Waukesha Farmers Market events and more.

"That's one of the things that I really love about Waukesha and I think that's why people encouraged me to run, just because I have such a passion for all of the wonderful activities and rich culture that we have in the downtown area," she said.

If elected, Halvensleben said she plans to focus on initiatives to support and help develop small businesses downtown. She said there's a range of businesses in downtown Waukesha and wants to make sure they are not neglected. Over the last 15 years, she said, the downtown area has really been revitalized and she would focus on continuing that.

"We've seen a lot of struggle with COVID and things like that, so we just want to make sure that the council is aware of that and focused on supporting these local businesses," she said.

Halvensleben said she also plans to focus on providing more transparency and accessibility to the Common Council.

"I have noticed that a lot of things that come before the City Council have been discussed in committee meetings and by the time it gets to the actual City Council meeting, things just sort of pass through without a whole lot of discussion," she said. "I think that kind of discourages residents from getting involved and knowing what's going on with the city and local government."

Aaron Spencer

Aaron Spencer announced he is also planning to run for the seat in April. Spencer said he has been a Waukesha resident for about 19 years, with approximately seven of those years spent in District 11.

"I really haven't moved out of (Waukesha) in the last 19 years so it's pretty special to me," he said. "All the businesses, all the people in it, I have great neighbors right now in this particular district, there's a lot of opportunities for growth around here. It's been great, you have plenty of shopping, plenty of entertainment, I like the Friday Night Live and the Farmers Market, it's fantastic — I don't get that in too many other places."

He said if elected, he plans to keep community events happening in Waukesha.

Spencer said he decided to run for the seat because, as a parent of five kids, he's had experience with them going to local schools and wants to make sure they get the same opportunities, especially with COVID-19. If elected, he plans to keep things running efficiently, he said.

Spencer said he also feels that there was frustration over the new aldermanic district maps and he felt people were ignored. The maps were recently approved by the Common Council.

"I want to make sure the people are heard," he said.

Spencer said he has also worked as a union carpenter, so he would bring some of his experience with apprenticeships to the council. He said he has experience working with the community, including The Women's Center.

"I like a lot of community work," he said. "I'd like to have the opportunity (of) working with the community some more."