



Hi. I'm Jamie Melke, candidate for Harbor Springs City Council. I'm a born and raised Northern Michigan woman who now calls Harbor Springs home. I love this community. For the last 10 years, I have worked at the New York Restaurant, where I have had the pleasure of serving countless residents and thousands of tourists. In total, I've spent 20 years in the hospitality business, on the front lines working with a team to make customers happy.

I mention the hospitality background because I think it is a good background for City Council. As a server, bartender and now front of the house manager, my job is to solve customer issues and enhance their dining experience. I do this by knowing and following the rules, by listening to each customer's concern, and then by trying to solve the problem. While I always want to say yes, sometimes it just isn't possible. After listening to a customer's concern, I've found that if I am transparent, honest, and patient, the customer almost always understands the solution.

While the issues facing Harbor Springs are undoubtedly more serious than a night out, I believe the approach should be the same. I can look at the big picture and make decisions based on facts and what is best for the most people. Sometimes the answer is no, no matter how much we want to say yes. The ability to say no and keep that customer happy is a valuable skill. In addition, by working in the service industry, I fully understand the value of a dollar.

People work hard for their money and every business, including government, should earn the people's trust before they ask for money.

We live in a fantastic town, really, a great community, with residents who help each other, we are fortunate to attract thousands of yearly visitors. Balancing these interests is a great opportunity, one that not every town has. I live, see and work within that balance every day. Honesty, transparency and patience.

Like so many my age, I never thought I would run for office or enter politics. But then I thought that maybe what we need is someone who really doesn't focus on politics, but instead focuses on people. I may not feel the need to engage someone on the federal defense budget, but I am passionate about solving the issues we face in our community. I welcome the opportunity to be the people's representative on the City Council. People not politics. Honesty, transparency, and patience. Thank you.