

City Commission Candidates

Zachary Clayton – City Commission Candidate

Zachary Clayton was born and raised in Ottawa. He graduated from Ottawa University with a B.S. degree in Management of Information Systems. He has worked for the both the Ottawa University and Franklin County Information Technology departments. Most recently he commuted to Kansas City, MO where he worked in Health Care IT for Cerner. In 2019 he started Picket Fence Properties, a local property renovation company. Zach had been a member of the local Rotary International club.

Zach is currently involved in several areas of construction in Ottawa including working as a General Contractor, renovator, house flipper and landlord.

Zach believes that Ottawa is ideally positioned for positive growth over the next decade. He sees the current lack of a competitive Internet Service Provider (ISP) market as a key detriment to the development of Ottawa and hopes to be able to work to bring other providers to the area. He sees that Ottawa is in desperate need of additional apartment complexes, multi-family units, and real estate developments and hopes to be able to find ways to incentivize developers in these growth areas.

Zach believes that the sidewalks of Ottawa are severely lacking and present a safety risk for pedestrians and drivers alike. He would like to constructively create a plan to better implement sidewalks, particularly around our schools.

Zach loves living in Ottawa and hopes to play a role in the continued growth, expansion and prosperity of Ottawa and its citizenry.

Eric Crowley – City Commission Candidate

Hello, I am Eric Crowley, and I am running to be re-elected to the Ottawa City Commission. I am an almost lifelong Ottawa resident (moved here around 2 years of age). Graduated from Ottawa High School in 1996.

I have been a commissioner for 4 years filling 2 open positions and being elected to a 2-year term in the last election.

Ottawa is in an ideal spot for immediate growth, and we need to capitalize on what the surrounding areas are doing to capture all potential benefits. I have spent my four years focusing on making the construction process more streamlined for builders and developers. I too am a builder and contractor, so I see firsthand the affect construction has on our community. I have heard to many times that Ottawa is a difficult place to build. I believe that We the City of Ottawa need to get No out of our mouths and instead say “What can we do to facilitate this project”. I know not all projects will work for our community but with some communication and negotiation we can find a middle ground that works for both parties.

Ottawa has great people living in it and is a wonderful place to raise a family. With the help of our community and an open-minded commission we can accomplish a lot together.

Thank you for taking the time to read my bio and I would appreciate your vote on November 2nd.

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Emily Graves – City Commission Candidate

My name is Emily Graves and I have lived in Ottawa off and on for the past 13 years. During my time here, I have served as the President of the CASA board, have served on the Communities in Schools board, the Ottawa Municipal Auditorium Board, The Play Task Force, and was one of a very small group of people that revived the Ottawa Area Young Professionals group.

I received my master's degree in Leadership from Baker University in 2015. Also, that year I was appointed to fill a vacant seat on the Ottawa City Commission. That seat was up for reelection in 2017 and I successfully maintained my seat. I served on the Ottawa City Commission until late 2018, at which point I moved outside of city limits and was no longer allowed to serve.

Not only do I have experience in government at the local level, but I also served as the Chief of Staff for the Speaker Pro Tem of the House in our Capital in Topeka. This allowed me to experience government at the state level for almost two years.

In 2020, I purchased a house in Ottawa, began working at Garmin, and have looked forward to the opportunity to be able to potentially serve the Citizens of the great city of Ottawa once again.

John Griffin – City Commission Candidate

My name is John Griffin. I was born in Ottawa and have lived in Franklin County for virtually my whole life. In fact, I am at least the 5th generation of my family to have lived in Franklin County, on my mother's side. I was raised in Pomona, KS when I was younger, then in high school we moved out closer to Appanoose, where my great grandparents had farmed.

I earned a degree in accounting from Emporia State University. I met my wonderful wife while attending ESU and were married after I graduated. I found work in Lenexa while she was finishing her degree at Emporia, so we decided to move to Ottawa.

We now have three beautiful children that attend Sunflower Elementary and Ottawa Middle School. Our children enjoy playing Ottawa Recreational and Ottawa Middle School Sports and utilizing all of Ottawa's great parks and facilities.

I currently work at COF Training Services Inc. as the Chief Financial Officer. I earned my Master's in Business Administration degree in 2018 from Emporia State. For the past 11 years I have worked as a Chief Financial Officer for different agencies. My role as Chief Financial Officer has been to support agencies in a fiduciary capacity, to make sure they are in compliance with all regulatory agencies, and to ensure that all funds are used and accounted for properly. This experience has made me an expert in all budgetary decisions. I have worked in agencies that have an \$8 million budget to a \$25 million dollar budget. The total budget for the City of Ottawa is within this range,

The reason I am running for City Commissioner is to serve the community, support the citizens of Ottawa and help it to continue to be a thriving and vibrant place live work and play for my kids and my grandchildren when that time comes.

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Michael (Mike) Skidmore — City Commission Candidate

I was born and raised in Ottawa. I graduated from OHS in 1974, and K-State in 1978, with a degree in agricultural economics. After my high school sweetheart, Marilee Thornburg, and I were married, we moved to central Kansas where I began my career in banking. Our family came back to Ottawa in 1995. Our three children graduated from Ottawa High School, and I have continued my banking career, while becoming an active member of various local organizations, including Franklin County Leadership Class (graduate), Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce (past chairman), Franklin County Development Council (past chairman), and Ottawa University Chancellor's Council. I was first elected to the Ottawa City Commission in 2013, and have served two terms, which have included two one-year stints as mayor. Additionally, my wife and I are members of Ottawa Bible Church, and I am the treasurer of Agape Interfaith Ministries of India.

As a commissioner, I have focused on being responsive to citizen's concerns, and making decisions that help our city to run in a more cost effective and efficient manner. For one thing, I encouraged the refinancing of bonds which will save the city approximately \$1,000,000 over the span of seven years. In my opinion, the measured growth we are currently seeing is a good pace for our city, and we certainly want that to continue. I am strongly in favor of the private and public sectors working together to improve Ottawa, as happened with construction of Legacy Square. I want to see that cooperation continue as Ottawa's many assets, are promoted and utilized, in unique ways, to bring many visitors to our community.

Having a diverse group of commissioners from various walks of life, is good for Ottawa. I believe my experience on the commission, along with my 43 years of banking experience, and my dedication to the betterment of our city, will continue to prove to be very beneficial to my fellow citizens. I count it a privilege to serve the people of Ottawa as a commissioner, and I would appreciate your vote on November 2nd.

USD 290 Candidates

Lynda Alderman - USD 290 Candidate

My family has lived in Franklin County/Ottawa 3-4 generations depending on which side of the family you want to talk about. I was born in Ottawa and grew up on the family dairy farm northwest of town. I graduated from Ottawa High School, attended Pittsburg State University, Sacramento State University and graduated from San Francisco State University with a degree in elementary education. I am married to David Alderman. He runs the family farm which is now strictly a grain operation. We have two children, both of whom attended Ottawa High School, and four grandchildren, two of whom are students at Ottawa Middle School and Ottawa High School. For thirty-one years I taught first grade at Eisenhower Elementary School and decided to run for school board, at the urging of others, two years after I retired. I am a lifetime member of KNEA (Kansas National Teachers Association) and was a member of the Ottawa Education Association during my teaching career. Membership in these organizations provided me with leadership experience on both the local and state level. I believe it is important to have a former educator on the Board of Education; someone who understands curriculum, testing, how education works and how teachers think. My volunteer activities center around being a member of the Board of Education and helping at the Franklin County Historical Society. During the school year I teach the one room country school experience at the Depot Museum to fourth graders. USD 290 has accomplished much in the past few years under the leadership of Dr. Stroh and Dr. Cobbs and I would like to be on the board another term to see that progress continue. My last class of first graders will graduate this year and, selfishly, I would like to be there in May to hand them their diplomas.

Kelli Graves – USD 290 Candidate

I am a lifelong resident of Ottawa and have volunteered in this community for many years with organizations such as CASA and Big Brothers Big Sisters. I am running for the school board because supporting and advocating for children is a passion of mine. I work at Newman Hospital in Emporia providing occupational therapy. My husband is a teacher and coach at Lawrence High School. Our daughter is a fifth-grade student at Garfield. My priorities for this district include the safety of students and staff during this pandemic, recruiting and retaining our dedicated teachers, and increasing fiscal responsibility with more transparency so that USD 290 patrons are fully aware of how their dollars are spent. Since the pandemic, we have adapted to so many challenges at school, and I want to learn from those experiences while moving forward with all of our kids to repair and progress academically, socially, and emotionally. I am committed to being an active, informed board member who encourages collaboration and critical thinking to achieve common goals. I want us to work together to create intelligent, community-minded individuals who are successful in whatever path they choose.

USD 290 Candidates

Jerry Reed - USD 290 Candidate

Born and raised at Guymon, Oklahoma. Graduated from GHS in 1963, from Panhandle State University with a BS in Mathematics in 1969 and from Southwestern Oklahoma with a Masters in Math Education in 1979. Married with three grown children

I taught High School Math and Science for 32 years in Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, and Colorado for 32 years along with coaching football, basketball, track and field, baseball, and golf. Taught some college classes at Seward County Community College and at Panhandle State.

After teaching I served a term on the school board at Middle Park School District in Granby, Colorado so I understand some things about the teaching and inside running of the school district.

I understand the feeling of teachers that nobody will listen sometimes. I know the order of going about getting things changed thru going to Principal and Superintendent, but sometimes teachers need another sounding board like a school board member that will be another step in getting heard.

I have two grandchildren attending District 290 and want the best for them and all the kids in the school district I sincerely believe that politics should not have a bearing on members of the school board, but what is best for the kids and the district.

Glendy Spigle – USD 290 Candidate

My name is Glendy Spigle. My husband and I have three children and have lived in Ottawa the last 11 years. I earned my degrees in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education and have put those to work teaching my own children each of their Kindergarten year and staying involved in their continued education. Living here in Ottawa, I have been involved in our church and have volunteered at Hope House and currently at Life Care. I am busiest taking care of our children, our small farm, and helping my husband in his business. Family is a priority for me and I believe parents should be making the key decisions for their children and should be involved in their children's education. If elected, my goal is to be a voice on the school board that represents the families in this community.

I also believe all children deserve an excellent education and part of that is to be in school where they can learn and get caught up from the last year and a half, and set them up to be successful and qualified for the work force in the future. I would like to see common sense solutions to the community's concerns put in place. Fiscal responsibility and transparency with the community is another way we can make sure our students receive an excellent education. I want to ensure that USD290 schools have a good reputation, set high standards, and continue to thrive.