

FRIENDS OF LAKE EUGENIA

GREY HIGHLANDS' MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES

To provide broader context for the Grey Highlands Municipal elections closing on October 26, 2026, we distributed an election questionnaire. I hope the information helps you cast your vote.

Please note that all property owners in Grey Highlands are eligible to vote. Online voting starts on October 13, 2026. Please go to:

<https://www.greyhighlands.ca/your-government/elections/>

NAME	EMAIL	STATUS
Andrea Edwards	pandorazbox.com@gmail.com	RESPONDED
Blake Martin	bbarwick269@gmail.com	RESPONDED
Dane Nielsen	nielsen_dane@hotmail.com	RESPONDED
Daniel Wickens	danwickens63@gmail.com	RESPONDED
Dave Meslin	dave@davemeslin.ca	RESPONDED
David Clarke	davidgclarke53@gmail.com	RESPONDED
David Russell	preceptorysongs@aol.com	RESPONDED
Emmett Ferguson	ferguson4ghcouncil@gmail.com	RESPONDED
Janet Carson	jbatchcarson@gmail.com	RESPONDED
Joel Loughhead	joel.loughhead@gmail.com	RESPONDED
Katrina Wood	hello@katforcouncil.ca	RESPONDED
Mark Brown	mark@markbrownformayor.ca	RESPONDED
Paul Allen	paul.allen.gh@gmail.com	RESPONDED
Sandra (Sandy) Thornton	sandythornton@yahoo.com	RESPONDED
Stephen Patrick Maloney	smaloney@spmaloneycorp.com	RESPONDED
Tom Allwood	tallwoodjr@hotmail.com	RESPONDED
Xerxes Khalkhaly	xerxes1realtor@gmail.com	RESPONDED
Don Alp	donmalp@gmail.com	NO RESPONSE
James Black	jamesblackforgh@gmail.com	NO RESPONSE
Paul McQueen	paulmcqueen@hotmail.com	NO RESPONSE

Morgan Anderson and Doug Hill

Friends of Lake Eugenia

helplakeeugenia.com

THE QUESTIONNAIRE SHOWN BELOW WAS EMAILED TO ALL CANDIDATES ON 2026-09-08

Thank you for volunteering to run for a Grey Highlands Municipal office. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Friends of Lake Eugenia is a registered charitable organization dedicated to improving Lake Eugenia's water quality. The health of Lake Eugenia is critical to Grey Highlands' success from ecological, recreational, and financial perspectives. Lake residents contribute over \$15,000,000 annually to the local economy and pay approximately 30% of the municipal taxes collected.

Friends has recently installed a lake-resident-funded \$500,000 water quality improvement system that appears to have had significant positive effects this year. No government agency participated in funding the project.

Our community of over 300 email participants is proposing the following questions regarding Grey Highlands' governance in general as well as Lake Eugenia-specific items.

We would appreciate your response to the following questions.

- **Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?**
- **What capital improvements are you prioritizing?**
- **Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth? What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?**
- **The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished?**
- **Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, "We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage." Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?**
- **A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached.**
- **Are there any other statements you wish to make?**

Thank you again for your time. We are attaching a copy of this document in PDF and Word formats to make responses easier.

We will post the complete text of your response for public viewing. Please send all responses to dghmanagement@yahoo.com by September 25th, 2026. We are happy to accept photographic images of your response.

Morgan Anderson and Doug Hill
Friends of Lake Eugenia
helplakeeugenia.com

MARK BROWN RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR

Hello Morgan and Doug,

Thank you for this opportunity. I left these answers until the 'last minutes' as the situations are all rapidly developing.

Here are my answers. If you need further clarification feel free to reach out.

Please confirm receipt as it represents quite a significant body of work (thank you for the opportunity!).

Mark

1. On Taxes, Growth, and Responsible Development:

My criticisms of this Municipality, long before I declared my candidacy, began with budget discipline. The approved 2025 budget carried a 14.2 per cent local increase, and the approved 2026 budget brought a 5.9 per cent blended increase. Those are two very large increases in two years.

Yes, there are pressures that no Council can wish away, including roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, insurance, and policing. But that is exactly why every ongoing expense must be justified. The money in a municipal budget is not abstract; it is time people spent away from their families to earn it. My first instruction will be a line-by-line review that protects front-line services and community assets, while examining overhead that cannot be justified, consulting, fleet decisions, and procurement. We also need to involve our community carefully so that we can deliver a better result with the people and knowledge we already have here at home.

This discipline then expands into funding growth. Before Council approves a major proposal, residents should be able to see whether water, wastewater, roads, and emergency services can support it; what growth-related capital costs will be recovered from the project; the long-term operating cost after construction; whether it protects the character and environmental assets that make Grey Highlands worth living in; and the net benefit to the existing community.

Development charges are intended to fund development-related capital costs. Grey Highlands is currently advancing an area-specific approach for the Markdale wastewater expansion, which is the right principle: growth-related infrastructure should be supported by future development, not quietly downloaded onto the people already here. This is critical: growth should not equal growth in taxation.

Grey Highlands needs housing choices, but development must fit the community and it must be honest about its cost. The people living in the communities affected must be part of the conversation, and development must be where it makes sense—not just where developers choose to put it.

I do not accept that success means turning Grey Highlands into a generic urban municipality. I see Markdale as the principal place for carefully planned, serviced growth, while every village and rural area should have a voice in how change happens. The outcome I want is simple: a community that can grow

sensibly, protect what makes it special, and keep taxes and long-term obligations within what families can afford.

2. Capital Improvements:

My capital priorities begin with protecting the places and services that hold our communities together.

First, we must stabilize our facilities. While the most obvious example is the Rocklyn Arena, I am concerned there are other facilities that have not received the attention they need while too much spending has gone to overhead instead of maintaining the places generations before us built and that so many people continue to enjoy. Rocklyn stands as a not-so-subtle reminder of what communities lose when facility-condition problems reach crisis point: a place to gather, play, volunteer, and raise their families.

Second, I would bring the Municipality's existing core-infrastructure work to transparent decisions. Inkerman and Canrobert need a final public design, a clear cost, and a funding plan that properly considers drainage and practical pedestrian safety—not simply the cheapest short-term option, and not an uncoded promise. The engineering and public-engagement work has been undertaken; residents now deserve a clear explanation of the preferred scope and a Council decision they can understand.

At Plants Point, the lake community has offered studies and reports. My approach would be cooperative from the start. The Municipality should receive and review that work, confirm responsibility for the asset, and return publicly with an answer grounded far more in “yes” than more reasons for “no.”[8]

We need stability in our roads and bridges budget. Council has made an attempt at this, and that work needs to continue. We need to lay out specifically how and when we will make the necessary improvements—and move before things reach crisis levels.

The Markdale splash pad is also an important, community-led project. The process has gone on far too long. I support moving it forward quickly but responsibly: with a final design, sustainable operating plan, confirmed funding, and a clear Council decision.

Across every project, my test will be the same: protect what we already have, be clear about the need, cost, and long-term obligation, use grants and partnerships where they make sense, and explain to residents what is being done and why. A careful line-by-line budget review is how we protect what matters most without simply passing a larger bill on to residents.

3) On Public Private Partnerships and Talisman:

At present, I do not see a public-private partnership that makes sense for Grey Highlands. Where a private entity wants to partner with the Municipality in a way that genuinely benefits residents, it can be considered. But we cannot simply accept a payment while residents' choices are pushed aside.

The TC Energy agreement in Meaford is a reminder of why that distinction matters. Meaford's Council approved a pre-development agreement that provides funding while the proposed project remains under review and while its conditional-support status remains in place. Whatever one thinks of that decision, my position is clear: no payment, benefit package, or promise of future funding should substitute for a community's right to decide whether a major project belongs there.

In regard to the Talisman parcel, I have been clear. The proposal, as it stands, does not have the confidence of the community I have heard from. In short, people do not want it. My expectation for this parcel is simple: there will be no development based on the proposal now before the Municipality. The

application remains under review, and I will work to have Council formally oppose it through every lawful municipal process available.

A Mayor or Councillor must work for the will of the people. My responsibility is not to make a deal at any cost. It is to protect the Escarpment, the Beaver Valley, Lake Eugenia, Kimberley, and the community's right to decide what kind of Grey Highlands it wants to be.

4) The Lake Task Force, Fertilizer, and Septic Inspections

The Lake Task Force has done, by all accounts, incredible work. These individuals have improved life on the lake for all residents. I would want that work to continue through a clear and accountable structure that builds upon the work already completed.

I support retaining the existing inland-lakes fertilizer restriction. It applies within 100 metres of the water's edge at our four major lakes, and it expressly excludes agricultural-zoned and actively farmed lands. Farmers have a legitimate economic role in Grey Highlands. Environmental policy that would impact them needs to be targeted, practical, and balanced.

I also support an improved, required septic inspection program for qualifying lakefront and near-shore properties, but I would not impose a permanent program without first publishing the results of the current Lake Eugenia pilot. The Municipality already has a 2026 pilot for properties with onsite sewage systems on the lake or within 100 metres of the shoreline. Council should receive a plain public report on the number of inspections, the types of concerns found, compliance and repair follow-up, costs, staffing, and the experience of property owners before deciding the permanent rules and inspection frequency.

If the evidence supports expansion, the program should be implemented consistently across the four lakes, with clear notice, reasonable scheduling and access arrangements, objective inspection standards, transparent fees, documented exemptions for newer or properly serviced advanced systems, and qualified municipal or Municipality-authorized inspectors. The purpose should be prevention and early repair—not punishment, surprise costs, or simply shifting blame onto homeowners. Council should then pass any required by-law amendments and report annually on program results, costs, and water-quality indicators.

5) Lake Eugenia Culvert Drainage and Blue-Green Algae

I alluded to the Plants Point culvert in my capital-improvements answer. It is self-evident that the work the community has already done in regard to the culvert should be accepted by Council. Perhaps it already has been. However, what is missing is action.

I will ensure a participatory and cooperative working relationship until this issue is resolved. With the work that the Friends of Lake Eugenia have already done, nothing less than our full gratitude and cooperation to solve this problem is acceptable. 6) On the Boat Launch Memorandum

It is difficult to ascertain, from the MOU I read, the context and history of how we got here with the boat launch and the EDCIA. I also do not have the facts needed to ascertain how the present arrangement is working and whether that arrangement should continue.

I would call for a public meeting with all interested parties, as well as meet with the stakeholders: the EDCIA, the Eugenia Lakeowners Association, and the Lake Management Task Force, at a minimum, along with relevant staff. This would provide Council with the information necessary to make an informed decision regarding a way forward.

Obviously, reducing and preventing blue-green algae is in everyone's best interest. But I cannot comment on how revenues from the boat launch should be used until I have a more complete understanding of municipal costs, EDCIA costs, and revenue from the boat launch. Until then, my principle is simple: any future arrangement must be transparent, fair to volunteers and taxpayers, and clear about the public benefit it delivers.

7) Other Statement

I am running for Mayor because our people deserve better. I started this journey based on a ridiculous tax increase that made me look closer at what is going on. This campaign has shown me that the problem isn't just taxes - it is a government that people no longer trust. Projects are left undone, facilities are shut down, and people keep asking 'what am I paying these ever-increasing taxes for?'

My commitments are straightforward. I will put **community before bureaucracy** by listening early and making it easier for local people to help solve local problems. I will put **common sense before consultants** by using outside expertise where it is genuinely needed, while respecting the experience of people who live and work here. I will bring **accountability for tax dollars** by asking what result each expense delivers, what alternatives were considered, and whether we are protecting the assets and services that families rely on. And I will make **affordability** the test that runs through every decision.

The money the Municipality spends is not just a budget line. It is time people spent away from their families to earn it. We owe residents clear priorities, honest answers, and follow-through. I believe Grey Highlands can grow sensibly, protect its environmental and community assets, and once again feel like a place where our children and grandchildren can build a life.

That is the standard I will bring as Mayor: practical leadership, respect for people and their money, and a Council whose actions speak louder than its words. We needn't look too far to see it is definitely time for change.

DANE NIELSEN RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR

Good afternoon everyone. Below find my responses to your questions.

- **Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?** The concept of an urban economic model only applies to Markdale. As our largest center with municipal services Markdale has capacity to grow. That growth can benefit the broader Grey Highlands area by attracting new shops and services and tax base. This means residents from Eugenia would not have to drive to Collingwood, Orangeville, or Hanover to get supplies. I do not believe that we want to see similar growth in Eugenia or Flesherton or Kimberley etc. The main fabric of Grey Highlands will continue to be rural open spaces. The way we control that growth is through water and sewer services. If water and sewer are not available only minor growth will take place. During this term of council I lead the charge to re-envision our future water systems. Previously our master water plan was to bring water to Eugenia and Kimberley by creating a box that links Markdale to Flesherton to Eugenia to Kimberley and back to Markdale. This absurd plan would have cost 100's of millions of dollars and encouraged growth along the full corridor. The new plan sees increased water services in Markdale with options of micro water treatment in smaller villages only if needed.
- **What capital improvements are you prioritizing?** I believe we need to take a hard look at recreation. Our four arenas are seeing wear and tear. We need to make investments in them before they break (further). Tourism is our opportunity to get new residents. Recreation is what makes Grey Highlands home. That includes the lake, hiking trails, and our parks and arenas. We need to bring in more users of our arenas by offering more sports. Get our youth playing rather than sitting idle, and making sure our seniors have spaces to stay fit and healthy. Additionally, we need to continue investments into our roads and bridges. This is by far our largest expense as a municipality. We need to use recent relevant data to identify roads that need to be focused on. This data is found in our roads needs study that is completed regularly.
- **Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth? What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?** I am excited to explore other sources of revenue

other than taxes. Many municipalities around us have campgrounds and social enterprises that bring in revenue. Public private partnerships should be explored to generate outside revenue. When it comes to the talisman lands, I have been honest from the beginning. There is an opportunity there that should be explored. Over 50,000 hectares of lands are protected in the valley with just 8 acres of opportunity at the former talisman lands. However, that does not mean I think a 600-unit residential village is the right answer. With the Bruce trail taking over the resort lands development seems unlikely. But still possible.

- The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished? I support the fertilizer ban continuing, I am also looking forward to the final taskforce report. The septic inspection program is a practical logical way to find any deficiencies in septic systems. We know some systems are frankly older than me, and we should be making sure they are functional. As we compile the data from the inspections we can work on a plan of timeline between the next cycle. The how this will be accomplished is harder to identify. I have heard from some residents that are not satisfied with the company doing the inspections now. Do we need to find a new company? Do we need to identify specific standards? I am open to hearing more from residents on this topic.
- Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, “We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage.” Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed? The challenge is understanding the impacts of removing the culverts on the lands not just the lake. If Grey Highlands causes flooding on lands that are privately owned, we would be responsible for damages. I am open to further investigations about the areas that would be effected, having conversations with land owners, and seeing if we can find a mutually beneficial agreement.
- A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached. The EDCIA has been working for many years to upgrade, enhance, and support the village of Eugenia and the boaters of Lake Eugenia. The Boat launch has been operated and built by the EDCIA. The new dock was paid for by the EDCIA, the pavilion at the park was completely paid for by the EDCIA with funds generated by the boat launch fees. The new playground was supported by the EDCIA. As quoted from the MOU, “The EDCIA agrees, at its sole expense, to be responsible for the overall operation, maintenance, and management of the boat launch and related premises” the

municipality does not have large expenses related to the boat launch. Yes, staff are engaged with the group and yes staff assist with the installation and removal of the dock and shed. I do support the EDCIA and the work it continues to do. In addition to the boat launch the group runs event and fundraisers that enhance the community.

- **Are there any other statements you wish to make?** Thank you for this opportunity to engage with your group. Over the last four years I have worked diligently to learn all I can about municipal government. This includes taking courses in municipal management and municipal law. I have done this to prepare myself to be the best member of council I can. To understand fully where staff's role lays and where Council's role fits. Council needs to be prepared to make tough decisions not run from them. We need to be open and honest with the community about what is happening not hide information. That is responsible leadership, that is why I am runner for Mayor.

Thanks again

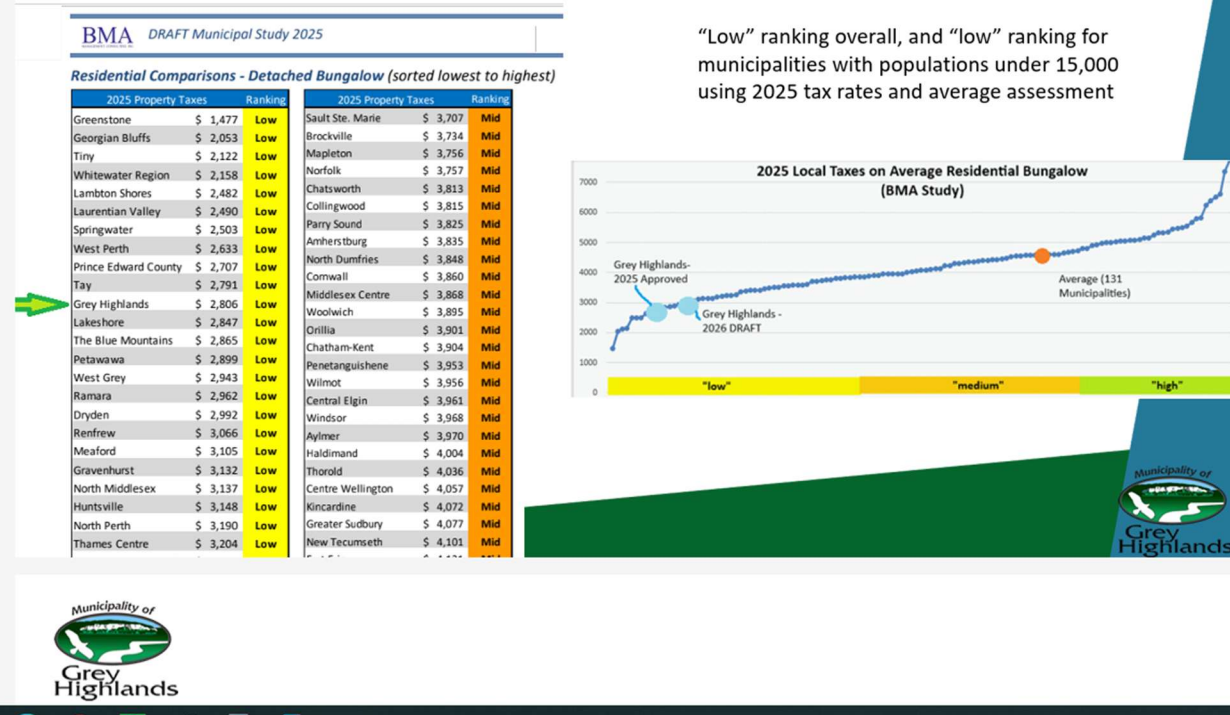
Dane Nielsen
Candidate for Mayor of Grey Highlands.

TOM ALLWOOD RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR DEPUTY MAYOR

Friends Of Lake Eugenia Questions Answered

- Current BMA Study has Grey Highland Property Taxes rated as low. See attached image

Local Taxes – how do we compare?



As Grey Highlands continues to grow responsibly growth will pay for growth and new growth assessment will contribute a levy decrease to our existing tax base. New Growth assessment resulted in a levy decrease of 3.5% to our existing tax base in the 2026 Budget.

- Capital Improvements I am prioritizing include:
 - Continued investment in our roads, bridges, culverts and ditches; including Canrobert/Inkerman, and Markdale Connecting Link Projects.
 - Replacing the Graders and Plow Trucks as required to maintain our 650KM of roads in Grey Highlands.
 - King Edward Park Phase One including the Splash Pad.
 - Keeping our arenas and community centres open.
- 1 The Downtown Revitalization in Markdale could provide opportunities for public/private partnerships. As Far as the Talisman development; These lands lie in a highly regulated area of Grey Highlands. Development in this area must be in alignment with the Planning act, The Provincial Planning Statement, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the Grey County Official Plan and the Grey Highlands Official Plan. The Proposed development is currently in an area zoned Recreational Resort in the NEP, Grey Highlands and the County OP's. If this development, which is currently being considered as a block plan of subdivision at the County is to proceed, I believe that the Niagara Development Criteria will require an

Environmental Impact Study, a Stormwater Management Plan and Site Plan Control. If the project moves to the next stage, it will require a Public Meeting and I would as a County Councillor make my decision after hearing all comments.

- Council has implemented an onsite septic system inspection program on all properties within 100 metres of lake shorelines. Lakes included in the program are Eugenia, Irish, Wilcox, and Brewster. A pilot program has started on Lake Eugenia and will extend to all identified lakes in 2027. Council implemented By-Law 2026-023 prohibiting the application of fertilizer within 100 metres of waters edge on those same inland lakes. As a Councillor I supported both of these.
- A co-operative arrangement where culverts drain on to private property between the lake and the culvert outlet where green infrastructure could be used to absorb ground water is something that could be explored.
- The EDCIA current MOU requires them at their sole expense be responsible for maintenance, operation and management of the boat launch and related premises. Ensuring the long-term sustainability and overall integrity of Lake Eugenia as a community asset for the benefit of residents and visitors is also a priority of the EDCIA. A new MOU will be considered in 2027. I could support revenue sharing to help offset the water quality improvement system operating costs.
- As a final comment. Congratulations to the Friends of Lake Eugenia on the positive effects the water improvement system has had on the lake this year.

Regards

Tom Allwood

Candidate for Deputy Mayor

Municipality of Grey Highlands

ANDREA EDWARDS RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR DEPUTY MAYOR

dghmanagement@yahoo.com

From: Pandoraz Box <pandorazbox.com@gmail.com>
Sent: September 29, 2026 5:19 PM
To: dghmanagement@yahoo.com
Subject: Re: 2026 ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

To: Morgan Anderson and Doug Hill, Friends of Lake Eugenia
From: Andrea Edwards, Candidate for Deputy Mayor of Grey Highlands

Thank you for reaching out and providing these questions.
Below are my formal responses regarding the governance and environmental health of Grey Highlands and Lake Eugenia.

On the EDCIA Memorandum of Understanding & Boat Launch Fees:

I find it fascinating that a group so heavily focused on its own 30% tax contribution believes the solution to an environmental crisis is defunding a volunteer-run park association that serves regular families. Let's be entirely clear: taking money away from the EDCIA will not clean up the lake. The EDCIA operates the boat launch to stimulate local community investment. Shifting to a revenue-sharing model to fund a private \$500,000 filtration system would mean short-changing local park maintenance and community programming. If the Friends of Lake Eugenia are genuinely concerned about water quality, I look forward to your group showing that same aggressive enthusiasm toward strictly enforcing our 100-foot shoreline setback rules. True environmental advocacy starts by looking at the environmental footprint of the massive new developments sitting right on the water's edge—not by trying to short-change local community groups. I fully support renewing the current MOU with the EDCIA.

On Culvert Drainage and Municipal Accountability:

I absolutely do not concur with the dismissive attitude that "water flows downhill and we intend to do nothing". That is a failure of basic infrastructure management. Direct, unmanaged culvert drainage that contributes to blue-green algae blooms is an active hazard to our recreational economy and ecology. As Deputy Mayor, I would support infrastructure engineering reviews to implement naturalized filtration trenches, sediment traps, or bioswales at key culvert outlets to catch runoff before it hits the lake.

On the Lake Task Force, Septic Inspections, and Fertilizer Bans:

I support extending the fertilizer ban and establishing a mandatory, cyclical septic inspection program for all waterfront properties. Runoff from poorly maintained septic systems is a primary driver of nutrient loading. We can achieve this through clear municipal by-laws, structured inspection schedules, and by collaborating with local conservation authorities to ensure enforcement isn't just a threat, but a standard practice.

On Property Taxes and Responsible Development:

Taxes increasing past the rate of inflation is unsustainable for regular working families and residents on fixed incomes. To transition responsibly, we must stop rubber-stamping standard, sprawling developments that cost the municipality more in long-term infrastructure upkeep than they bring in

through short-term tax revenue. I advocate for innovative, high-density, low-impact housing models (such as modular and eco-friendly tiny home clusters) that increase the tax base efficiently without destroying our natural landscapes.

On Capital Improvements and the Talisman Parcel:

My capital priorities are green infrastructure, climate-resilient road/drainage design, and deeply affordable transitional housing. Regarding the Talisman parcel, I expect any development to strictly adhere to ecological protections. I do not support turning public assets or ecologically sensitive lands over to pure luxury developments that do nothing to solve the local housing crisis.

Sincerely,

Andrea Edwards

Candidate for Deputy Mayor of Grey Highlands

Logic. Backbone. Hope.

JOEL LOUGHEAD RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR DEPUTY MAYOR

On Wed, Sep 9, 2026 at 4:53 PM joel loughead <joel.loughead@gmail.com> wrote:
Hi Doug, Morgan,

Thank you for the thoughtful questions. My answers are in **red** below

- **Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model? New developments requiring massive increases in municipally owned and maintained infrastructure are extremely expensive and a long-term net negative to our financial health. Focusing growth on existing infrastructure is the key to overall lower taxes for all Grey Highlands ratepayers.**
- **What capital improvements are you prioritizing? Road safety infrastructure in our hamlets and villages. A revitalized King Edward Park in Markdale's downtown core, which will create excellent recreation space, stimulate dense/urban growth, and attract the types of professionals and families we want to see in Grey Highlands.**
- **Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth? I'm open to public/private partnerships. I'd like to see this model investigated for some of our arenas and community halls.**
- **What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel? The Bruce Trail Conservancy has purchased and is committed to renaturalizing the old ski slopes and hotel buildings. The remaining developers (BVDG) should propose a plan in line with the Niagara Escarpment Plan, and appropriately sized for the sensitivity of the land and the village of Kimberley.**
- **The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished? I strongly supported the fertilizer by-law and septic inspection program. I also believe we should be looking at ways to incentivize shoreline renaturalization which creates a buffer zone along the lake,**

absorbing nutrients. As the septic inspection program progresses, we should listen to the community and look at successful models in other jurisdictions to maximize our success.

- Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, “We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage.” Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed? **Best practices should be implemented here. Would a retention pond work to slow nutrient transfer? We should be looking at successful solutions in other regions and pursuing those models.**
- A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached. **The EDCIA's mandate is for local, small scale improvements in the village of Eugenia. Most years they barely break even financially. I don't believe a revenue sharing model would be all that significant. That said, I'm open to the conversation and I'd be interested in pursuing a local water quality improvement fee/surcharge to visiting boaters from outside the municipality.**
- Are there any other statements you wish to make? **I appreciate all of the Friends of Lake Eugenia's efforts and financial commitments towards the improvement of Lake Eugenia's water quality. It already appears as though the aeration project has had a positive impact, which is fantastic. As we know, BGA is a complex problem decades in the making, but I believe we are on the right path towards a healthier, cleaner Lake Eugenia. As Deputy Mayor, I will continue to work with the community to make this lake - and all of our watersheds - as healthy as they can be for generations to come.**

Best, talk soon,

Joel Loughead
Councillor, Municipality of Grey Highlands
Candidate for Deputy Mayor 2026
www.joelloughead.com

PAUL ALLEN RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

1. Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?

I believe our municipality is better defined by its rural, agricultural, and small-town character. Many people move here to escape urban sprawl and enjoy the area's natural beauty and rural way of life. The growth of Mennonite communities has further strengthened this identity by revitalizing underused farms and increasing rural commerce.

Therefore, I believe to actively manage responsible development for our rural economy we need to support small businesses, the agricultural economy and farmers (who feed us), and protect/preserve our farmland and natural spaces.

I propose that we support our rural/agricultural economy by:

- Ensuring that large scale development is in settlement areas (ensuring that our farmland is preserved).
- Continuing to provide Community Improvement Grants for small businesses.
- Continuing to support farmers by allowing regulated on- farm diversified uses to help operators thrive.
- Promoting local tourism that celebrates and protects our natural landscape.

To keep tax increases closer to inflation, Council must take responsibility for controlling local costs. Council and staff must carefully review each department's budget to separate needs from wants. We should continue to pursue additional sources of revenue through federal and provincial grants and foundations. The challenge is managing rising costs beyond Council's control, including policing, engineering, fuel, utilities, and equipment. Also, in recent years, Council has been required by the province to increase the asset management reserve to help fund future capital replacements.

Development charges should fully cover services for new residents, and developers should fund the infrastructure their projects require. Council's area-specific charge for the Markdale wastewater treatment plant expansion shifts that cost from taxpayers to developers. Encouraging buildings of two or more storeys can also generate substantially more tax revenue without significantly increasing servicing costs compared with single-storey development.

2. What capital improvements are you prioritizing?

- 1) Markdale wastewater plant expansion - To accommodate future housing growth and commercial/industrial expansion.
- 2) Markdale Connecting Link - This long-overdue project is now underway, supported by a \$5 million provincial grant.
- 3) Road paving, bridge repairs, and traffic-calming measures — prioritizing resident safety.
- 4) Flesherton Fire Hall addition - Fire and emergency services are a top priority. Expanding the existing hall was more cost-effective than building a new facility and provides an additional

bay for a tanker truck, a dedicated meeting and training room, improved washroom and shower facilities for the growing number of female first responders, and space for laundry and storage.

- 5) Stothart Hall accessibility - improvements are long overdue, and I am pleased the project is moving forward. Phase 1 will install a commercial accessibility lift.
- 6) Rocklyn Arena - A central gathering place for sports, agricultural events, youth programs, and community theatre, the arena is the social heart of Rocklyn. Detailed information about the required repairs and upgrades, including their costs, is essential prior to moving forward.
- 7) Flesherton pickleball courts - a much-needed outdoor facility for this rapidly growing activity, enjoyed by people of all ages.
- 8) King Edward Park, Markdale - Phase 1 of the master plan will expand recreation opportunities for all ages with an accessible splash pad and other amenities.

3. Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth? What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?

If public/private partnership opportunities come up they would certainly be welcome. Many community arenas are sponsored by local commercial/industrial businesses.

The Niagara Escarpment Commission allows residential development on the Talisman lands only when linked to recreational use, such as the ski hill or golf course, making a major housing project unlikely. Council did not intend extensive residential development in this sensitive area when negotiating with prospective buyers. I believe the purchaser misled Council, and I welcomed the Bruce Trail Conservancy's acquisition of the property.

4. The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished?

I fully support stronger municipal by-laws on the fertilizer ban and septic inspections on lake front properties. Protecting our local lakes from nutrient runoff and toxic algae is vital to environmental health, property values, tourism, and local businesses. Council will receive a final recommendation report from the Lake Management Task Force at which time Council will provide direction on the findings. Moving the pilot inspection program to a mandatory inspection is one of the options to consider.

5. Friends of Lake Eugenia have requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, "We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage." Do you concur with this

statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?

I recently inspected the culvert on Point Road. Although water naturally flows downhill, inaction is unacceptable. Two low cost, low maintenance interventions are;

1. Vegetated bioswales: Use native plants and suitable soils in roadside ditches to slow runoff and absorb phosphorus before it reaches the lake.
2. Catch-basin inserts or silt traps: Install filters in key culverts to capture sediment and organic debris.

A Council member could raise the issue through a notice of motion, but the quickest approach would be for Friends of Lake Eugenia to submit its concerns to the clerk and copy Council. A councillor could then request that the letter be placed on an upcoming agenda. Council could direct staff to report on possible solutions and then determine the appropriate action.

6. A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, **and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system?

****The current MOU actually states “that the EDCIA agrees at its sole expense to be responsible for the overall operation, maintenance and management of the boat launch and related premises” (see Responsibilities of the Eugenia & District Improvement Association- fourth bullet)**

The MOU identifies the Eugenia Boat Launch as an opportunity for community investment. EDCIA’s priorities are to:

- Protect Lake Eugenia for residents, boaters, and visitors;
- Maintain the boat launch and waterfront; and
- Promote the lake’s long-term sustainability.

Because two priorities directly support lake health, I support adding a revenue-sharing agreement between EDCIA and Friends of Lake Eugenia to the updated MOU, helping offset the water quality system’s operating costs.

Respectfully submitted, Paul Allen

Consult, Listen, Respond, Serve

JANET CARSON RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

Friends of Lake Eugenia

I will respond to your questions to the best of my knowledge, understanding that there may be things I don't have easy access to.

1. This is a complex question, and I don't feel I have enough information to comment at this time."
2. We need to increase our reserves while keeping the tax levy as low as possible. We have an aging infrastructure which must be revitalized. Many of our facilities are over 50 years old and have been neglected. This must be addressed. Our greatest levy amount is in the transportation department. Our road system must be maintained and upgraded. Grey Highlands needs to investigate all means of alternate revenue streams as well as the levy.
3. Public/Private partnerships are quite complicated and I am not aware of any proposals at this point. Can you identify any possibilities?
4. As you are aware, the blue-green algae problem is province wide. The hot summers we have had and the shallow depth of the lakes are contributing to the problem. There needs to be more water testing at all inlets to the lake. Since I don't know the exact context of the quote, I don't want to comment at this time.

If testing shows that the contaminants are coming from any of the inlets then staff need to investigate possible options for filters. I haven't yet had the chance to study the blue-green algae issue in depth, so I want to be careful not to overstate my knowledge. If I am elected, I will be open to any and all suggestions. I believe that, despite little news lately, there is still a problem with Zebra mussels and live bait entering the lake. All these things need to be addressed.

5. With regards to the EDCIA MOU, I haven't seen any year end reports. In addition to the boat launch, it is my understanding that they also maintain the ball diamond. I would support investigating a net revenue sharing but, without actual figures, I don't have all the details at this time.

DAVE CLARK RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

Friends of Lake Eugenia Election Questionnaire

1. I think that new development should pay for new infrastructure and occur on full services or partial services if possible, without harming the environment. The municipality still has a large rural tax base mixed with recreation, tourism and urban growth pressures. The environment should be of high regard in any new growth planning.
2. Capital Improvements - I think the municipality should make capital improvements to facilities when required so that problems are dealt with quickly. Roads and other infrastructure also need to be maintained. It is better to be proactive.
3. Talisman - I think there needs to be an application from the proponent to see what development might be proposed. Whatever the proposal may be there will be many hurdles to clear before moving forward.
4. The fertilizer ban should be extended and there should be an improved septic inspection program. This could be accomplished by having lake residents and the Municipality coming to an agreement on what the criteria would be and who would do inspections.
5. Water does flow downhill, but I think there should be more discussion and make any future road improvements with water diversion through a culvert / ditch system to bypass the lands and lake where possible.
6. I am not sure how much revenue is collected but a shared revenue arrangement should be considered. The Memorandum of Understanding should be extended.
7. I want to congratulate the Friends of Lake Eugenia on the vision and efforts to improve the health and water quality of the lake.

EMMETT FERGUSON RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

Friends of Lake Eugenia
Grey Highlands Council Election Questionnaire
Emmett Ferguson Responses
September 9, 2026

Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?

I think the most important lever for responsible development in Grey Highlands right now is affordable housing. Since the last election, I founded AHIGH Affordable Housing in Grey Highlands Inc. along with Reid Dennison and Helmut Mayer, and we tried to buy the former Markdale Hospital as a site for the development of affordable and below-market rental housing. In that process I was most encouraged to see that there is sufficient private, patient capital ready in our community to invest alongside government in the future prosperity of Grey Highland through the creation of non-profit rental housing. So my plan is not for Grey Highlands taxpayers alone to fund the coming transitions, but to have our Council lead and coordinate combined private, social and government responses to market failures, starting with housing.

What capital improvements are you prioritizing?

Housing and water.

Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth?

Of course! Again to housing, there are Federal options available through Build Canada Homes that could be connected to private investment, and given Grey County's mandate in this area, these are precisely the kinds of partnerships I have been building with AHIGH.

What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?

I don't know what to expect at this point. I am heartened by the recent sale to the Bruce Trail Conservancy, however, as I strongly feel that reforesting the slope will improve the ecological resilience of the Trail corridor as a whole. The Bruce Trail remains a major tourism driver, and there is plenty of potential for the site to serve multiple recreation functions while returning to a more or less natural state, much like the rest of the Trail.

The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished?

I'm in favor of extending the fertilizer ban. As this existing inspection program wraps up, I'd like to see a full report on its outcomes before considering a longer-term program.

Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us,

“We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage.” Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?

I’m not certain I understand the issue entirely, but my assumption is that culverts are used to provide a route for water to flow away and not to back up behind potential obstructions like roadways, especially during seasonal surges. A culvert thus does not create a watershed but rather directs it in certain places to prevent erosion and overflows. Simply removing a culvert will often do nothing to stop the movement of water at the surface or under it. Reversing water flows on the ground is not easy or cheap, but if Lake Eugenia residents bring forward reasonable ideas and resources to reduce nutrient infiltration from one or more culverts, I’d certainly consider them.

A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached.

I am likely to support the continuation of the MOU, though I would also consider amending it to collect a surcharge for each boat put in at the launch expressly to go toward the lake oxygenation operations. I’d like to more fully understand the costs and revenues of the boat launch operations before assessing the size of any water quality surcharges, however.

Are there any other statements you wish to make?

Thanks for your commitment to Grey Highlands, and your generosity in improving Lake Eugenia for everyone.

XERXES KHALKALY-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

Hi Morgan and Doug,

Hope you are doing well please see below:

(Usually it takes me a couple of days to respond but today is a slow day and I just came back from a quick swim at the lake.)

Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?

Property taxes have increased faster than inflation, and continually raising taxes is not a sustainable long-term solution. I support responsible development that broadens the tax base and creates economic activity without placing excessive pressure on existing residents.

I believe Grey Highlands should review additional revenue tools, including licensing fees and fair taxation policies that ensure commercial activities contribute appropriately to municipal services. Commercial short-term accommodation operators should contribute fairly, while homeowners renting a room or basement apartment in their primary residence, particularly seniors supplementing their income, should not be treated the same as commercial operators.

I also support reviewing situations where properties receive preferential tax treatment while significant portions of their operations function as commercial or industrial enterprises. Taxation should reflect actual use while respecting provincial regulations and assessment rules.

At the same time, I would work with Grey County and other partners to explore additional tax relief opportunities for seniors and residents on fixed incomes.

My goal is to broaden the tax base through responsible growth and fair taxation rather than relying on continual property tax increases.

What capital improvements are you prioritizing?

Capital planning must remain flexible because municipalities face changing circumstances, emergencies, and infrastructure challenges that cannot always be predicted years in advance.

My priority is maintaining and improving core infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water systems, wastewater systems, and public safety infrastructure. However, I also recognize that unforeseen events such as flooding, bridge failures, or other emergencies may require immediate attention and budget adjustments.

I support long-term infrastructure planning that balances fiscal responsibility with preparedness while ensuring taxpayer dollars are invested where they provide the greatest long-term benefit to residents and businesses.

Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth? What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?

I support exploring public-private partnerships that create long-term economic growth while respecting environmental constraints and community values.

With respect to Talisman, I believe we should think beyond the traditional "development versus no development" debate. One concept worth exploring is a long-term educational, cultural, and research-focused vision that could include a satellite/ Unit Outlets. university campus, specialized research facilities, student residences, arts and cultural programming, and environmental education.

Such a model could attract students, researchers, artists, entrepreneurs, and visitors while creating sustainable economic activity throughout Grey Highlands.

As that growth becomes established, it can help create the critical mass necessary to support additional employment opportunities and services within Markdale, the primary urban centre of Grey Highlands. Before we can realistically expect more grocery stores, professional services, entertainment venues, light industrial businesses, manufacturing opportunities, or other commercial investment, we must first create the demand and workforce that support them.

Educational institutions, research facilities, cultural programming, and student residences can help generate that demand by bringing people, investment, and economic activity into the community. This, in turn, can create employment opportunities for local youth and young families, helping them build careers closer to home rather than leaving the region in search of work.

My objective is not growth for the sake of growth, but sustainable and feasible growth that strengthens the economic heart of Grey Highlands while respecting our environmental constraints and rural

character. A successful educational and research-based development could become a catalyst for long-term investment, economic diversification, and employment opportunities while supporting the services and infrastructure that residents increasingly need.

The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished?

Yes. I support extending the fertilizer restrictions and improving septic system inspection programs if the evidence demonstrates that these measures continue to protect water quality and are implemented fairly and effectively.

Lake Eugenia is an important environmental, recreational, and economic asset. Protecting water quality benefits residents, visitors, businesses, and future generations.

Any program should include clear standards, reasonable timelines, public education, and transparent reporting. Property owners should understand both the purpose of the program and the expectations placed upon them.

My approach is to balance environmental stewardship with practical implementation based on science and measurable results.

Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, “We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage.” Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?

While it is true that water naturally flows downhill, I do not believe that should automatically end the discussion.

I support a cooperative approach between the Municipality, residents, environmental experts, and engineering professionals to better understand the extent of nutrient loading associated with stormwater and culvert drainage entering Lake Eugenia.

Rather than assuming nothing can be done, I would support evaluating practical, evidence-based solutions where they can demonstrate measurable benefits. These may include improved stormwater

management practices, vegetated swales, sediment control measures, drainage improvements, or other scientifically supported approaches.

My approach would be based on collaboration, science, cost-effectiveness, and measurable outcomes rather than assumptions.

A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached.

I appreciate the efforts of the volunteers who operate and manage the boat launch, and I recognize the value they provide to the community.

Before deciding whether the current Memorandum of Understanding should continue unchanged, I would want to review the annual reports, financial information, maintenance obligations, operational outcomes, and overall benefits provided under the agreement.

Based on the MOU provided, the EDCIA is responsible for the operation, management, maintenance, inspections, and administration of the boat launch, while the Municipality continues to support certain infrastructure and seasonal operations.

If evidence suggests that amendments could improve transparency, fairness, operational efficiency, or environmental stewardship, I would be open to discussing potential changes, including revenue-sharing models. However, any decision should be based on facts, financial data, community consultation, and a clear understanding of the responsibilities and costs carried by each party.

My preference is always to review the evidence before reaching a conclusion.

Are there any other statements you wish to make?

Thank you for providing this questionnaire and for encouraging meaningful public discussion.

Throughout this campaign, I have tried to approach issues with a simple philosophy: think first, ask questions, gather the facts, and make decisions based on evidence rather than assumptions.

If elected, I will be one vote out of seven on Council. I cannot promise specific outcomes, nor should any candidate. What I can promise is that I will do my best to ensure important decisions are supported

by appropriate studies, professional expertise, and objective evidence before major commitments are made.

Different challenges require different solutions. Whether the issue involves infrastructure, development, environmental protection, taxation, or economic growth, my approach will be to understand the problem, review the available evidence, consider the long-term impacts, and support solutions that are practical, responsible, and in the best interests of Grey Highlands residents.

I believe thoughtful planning, evidence-based decision-making, and common sense are the foundation of good municipal government, and that is the approach I will bring to Council if elected.

Regards,

Xerxes Khalkhaly, MSc

STEVE MALONEY RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

- Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?
- **ANSWER:** *GH the urban sprawl is moving north up highway 10 and needs to be managed in a way that will be a benefit to the residents of GH – the reality is GH will have a BIG BOX neighbourhood which may be a good thing. The DOLLARAMA store in Markdale is usually very busy so that's what people may want.*
- What capital improvements are you prioritizing?
- **Answer:** *Roads, bridges and sewers are being worked on so I believe this issue is being addressed.*
- Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth? What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?
- **Answer:** *the lower level of 23 acres should be development of upscale townhouses and a 9-hole Executive Golf course – some development can take place without affecting the natural beauty of the Beaver Valley which can attract tourists and commercial interests.*
- The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished? **Answer:** *I have spent an hour with the President of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and I would take their advice of establishing partnerships with GH, MOE, GSCA and the owner of the Lake Hydro One – these organizations have the “muscle” to achieve EAL progress.*
- Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, “We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage.” **ANSWER:** *not sure what the solution is here but I still advise to work closely with the GSCA/GH/MOE/Hydro One to find a solution.* Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?
- A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached. **ANSWER:** *I'm going to propose a very radical solution here: a 2-year ban on all gasoline powered motorboats – Lake Eugenia is the only shallow lake in the area that allows motorized boats in the water and MAYBE that is the problem that is causing the blue algae that we're experiencing - its*

worth a try and based on successful results we bring back boats with a steep enough yearly license fee that drastically reduces boat traffic. Lakers will eventually take up healthier and environmentally endeavours like sailing, kayaking and canoeing.

- Are there any other statements you wish to make?

BLAKE MARTIN RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

1. Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?

Before I get to the main part of your question I'm going to push back on your claim that "Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation." This is both true and false at the same time. If you only consider the inflationary impact in the Consumer Price Index – which includes food, shelter, household operations, clothing, health and personal care, recreation, and other variables – yes, the tax rate does exceed the rate of inflation – your average annual tax increase since 2017 has been ~6% from the municipality, ~2% from the County, and a net decrease of about ~1.5% from the Province, while the average rate of inflation for the CPI is ~2.7%. However, these are not the things that Municipalities purchase. We buy asphalt not apples. If you look at the average rate of inflation for the Building Construction Prices Index (BCPI) over the same period it is more than triple that of the CPI at ~8.94%. Therefore, not only have your taxes therefore not exceeded the annual rate of inflation, they have consistently remained below it.

However, you are correct in feeling as though the tax rates have gone up more than they have in a decade. Why? Because these are averages over the past 9 years. Indeed, if we compare these two numbers year-by-year it is clear that the Municipality has not been properly funded in over 9 years – I suspect longer, however, I cannot find tax rate information for Grey Highlands before 2017 at the moment. While the Municipality was still underfunded before the Pandemic, the span from 2020 – 2023 has put us far behind the effects of inflation. For instance, from Q1 of 2020 to Q1 of 2021 to BCPI's rate of inflation was ~13.9%; our tax increase was only 1.55%. The following year – Q1 of 2021 to Q1 to 2022 – the BCPI's rate nearly doubled to 26.5%; our tax increase was only ~6.6%. From Q1 of 2022 to Q1 of 2023, another 15.3%; our tax increase, was only ~6.2%. Only in 2024 did the tax increase rate catch up with inflation at ~7.65% to ~6.20%.

Allow me to put this another way. Even if we include the past three years of spending above the BCPI's rate of inflation, we are still behind by over 25%. This is all to say that our taxes have not even kept up with inflation, let alone exceeded it (I have included all of my sources below and compiled it into a chart for your viewing).

I am also not quite sure what you mean when you say that the Municipality is "transitioning to an urban economic model". If by this you mean, "what am I going to do to ensure that we retain our youth, farmland and rural identity in the face of growth pressures?" great question. We should be prioritizing on re-developing underutilized land rather than virgin builds, working with the County, Provincial, and Federal government towards new cost sharing and revenue generation tools so we don't have to continue to squeeze the property tax, and invest in affordable housing across the Municipality so that youth in every community can have the option to stay in that community. If, however, I have misunderstood your question please do feel free to correct me.

However, it should be noted that the budget is –due to Strong Mayor powers – no longer Council's decision but the Mayor's decision. Therefore, while I will always work towards

retaining and investing our youth and rural identity, I cannot promise that these priorities will end up in the budget.

2. What capital improvements are you prioritizing?

In my eyes, investments should be focused on two things, affordability and community safety. While I support ensuring that Municipal investments are targeted at reducing the everyday costs of our residents – such as electricity and water bills – I would like to take this opportunity to speak on improving community safety. I remember the tragedy which occurred on Inkerman Street. While we can never fully prevent a similar incident from happening, we can be damn sure to make it less likely. What I would like to see is some form of pedestrian pathway or barrier safely on most – if not all – of the side streets in our communities. Don't get me wrong, I know that there will be a cost to this, however, when it comes the safety of you, your children, your grandchildren and every other resident of our communities, penny pinching is unacceptable. These sorts of barriers are not perfect and they do not and can not cover every single possible scenario, but that does not mean we should continue to do nothing and hope everything will be fine.

Indulge me as I share an anecdote. I live in Markdale and for the past year or so we have had an individual on a motorbike routinely racing up and down the streets of Markdale at all hours of the day. I've personally seen him as early as 10:00AM and as late as 11:00PM. If we continue to do nothing, it is only a matter of time before he hits someone, or someone hits him. Even if he were to completely stop his reckless driving, how long would it be before someone else starts doing the same thing?

This is to say nothing of the countless instances of speeding and reckless driving by non-residents passing through our communities to get to their tourist destinations. Just this past labour day weekend Grey Burce OPP issued 45 speeding charges, 5 impaired driving charges, and 16 seatbelt charges ([Source](#)). We cannot continue to hope and pray that people will just do the right thing. We need to be taking steps towards ensuring that the roads in our communities are safe for both pedestrians and motorists. I do not know what the perfect solution to this problem is – and frankly if anyone does say they do, I suspect they are either lying or trying to sell you something – but our current response of do nothing and hope it all works out is pathetic and unacceptable.

As for concrete action, I would immediately instruct staff to begin researching and drafting proposals with cost-per-resident estimates, and actionable timelines. Once done, I would bring these options to a town hall so that we, as a community can decide how best to tackle this issue.

- 3. Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth?
What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?**

There are certainly public-private partnerships which we could be doing – e.g., renovating the Flesherton Commons, the arenas in Rocklyn and Osprey, building housing or a park over on the former train-station in Markdale, or partnering to install solar panels on our homes – but as for specific plans which have already been worked out in advance? No. To be clear however, I am all for these relationships when and where they make sense and as long as they are targeted towards the needs of our residents.

As for the Talisman parcel, at this moment I do not feel informed enough to make a concrete decision either way. I – personally – have been having a hard time finding the information I would need to make a clear decision on the matter. However, what I do know is that the proposed development in Talisman is supposed to connect to the Municipality's water system. This is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, because of the way that the Clean Water Act is designed more users means lower average costs in the long-run. On the other hand, connecting or constructing the infrastructure to the Municipality's water system means millions in upfront costs, i.e., higher water bills in the short-term. In addition, there are the local concerns of our residents in Kimberly and Eugenia. As I already discussed, we already have a speeding issue in Grey Highlands. Kimberly and Eugenia are no different.

This is all to say that, as it stands, I could be convinced in other direction. Grey Highlands does need more houses, but we need affordable houses, not multi-million dollar chalets and cottages. If we on Council could come to an agreement with the developers that would satisfy the concerns of the community and still meet the needs of our residents, than I would be in favor, if not, then I would have to reconsider supporting such a project.

4. The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished?

I would absolutely support keeping the Lake Task Force in place throughout my term as Councillor. While I'm sure most of us recall what happened in Walkerton in 2000, I had E.coli induced kidney failure – in an unrelated incident – when I was a child and it nearly claimed my life. My kidneys will never work at 100% capacity because of it and while I was lucky to not need a transplant as a child the odds that I will eventually need one is uncomfortably high. The work that the Lake Task Force does to mitigate the risk of this happening to someone else is something which I will always unconditionally support.

As for concrete actions, I apologize but I do not know every single bit of what goes into the septic inspection system, nor do I know if the inspections we currently mandate are inadequate. If I was presented with irrefutable information that the current system is leaving our residents vulnerable to similar E.coli outbreaks – or other illnesses cause by agricultural runoff – yes I would of course support revising the inspection process. As for how I would hope to accomplish this, I would again instruct staff to review the current inspection process and ensure that any potential improvements are included in a re-worked by-law.

5. Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, “We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage.” Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?

If that is true, I must say that I am quite disturbed and disappointed in whoever wrote that to you. That is no way to speak to a resident and frankly their callous disregard of the potential harm that decaying public infrastructure poses to the community is disgusting. I hope that you will publicly share copies of their response so that the public knows exactly how little this member of Council cares for their community. As for if I concur with their statement, no.

If our infrastructure is decaying, we have a responsibility to our residents to repair it. Obviously this is going to come at a cost, but as I said above, the safety of our residents is not something we should be cutting corners on. What I work towards is having staff – or an independent commission/contractor – first work towards a report on the scale of the issue and some cost-per resident solutions to the issue – perhaps a series of drainage systems to keep the runoff from ending up in the lake(?) – which we could then bring before the community and work together to decide how best to respond.

6. A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached.

If what you are saying here is correct, then the EDCIA is in breach of the MOU. On your first point, the MOU clearly states that in exchange for ensuring that “Revenue related to the operation of the boat launch and related premises will remain with the EDCIA” (Responsibilities of the EDCIA, point 3), the EDCIA agrees to cover all costs related to the, “... overall operation, maintenance, and management of the boat launch and related premises.” (Responsibilities of the EDCIA, point 4).

As for your second claim, one of the first lines of the MOU reads, “Priority areas for the EDCIA include: protecting the overall integrity of Lake Eugenia for the benefit of the residents, boaters, and visitors; Maintaining the boat launch and waterfront; Ensuring the long-term sustainability of Lake Eugenia as a community asset.” I would personally interpret this as the EDCIA having an obligation to improve the water quality of the Lake as part of the efforts to ensure “the long-term sustainability of Lake Eugenia as a community asset.”

This is all to say, that if your claims are accurate, then yes I would support re-negotiating the MOU to ensure that the overall water quality of the lake is explicitly protection. In addition, I would perhaps support to a different group to partner with. However, with an accusation like this, I must ask what your sources are as I cannot seem to find verifiable information on this issue. Would you be able to provide me, as well as the other candidates, sources which support your claims?

7. Are there any other statements you wish to make?

First, I'd like to thank you for reaching out and holding us candidates accountable to the public and informing us on these issues. We cannot do this without committed people and groups like you keeping us candidates and future members of council informed.

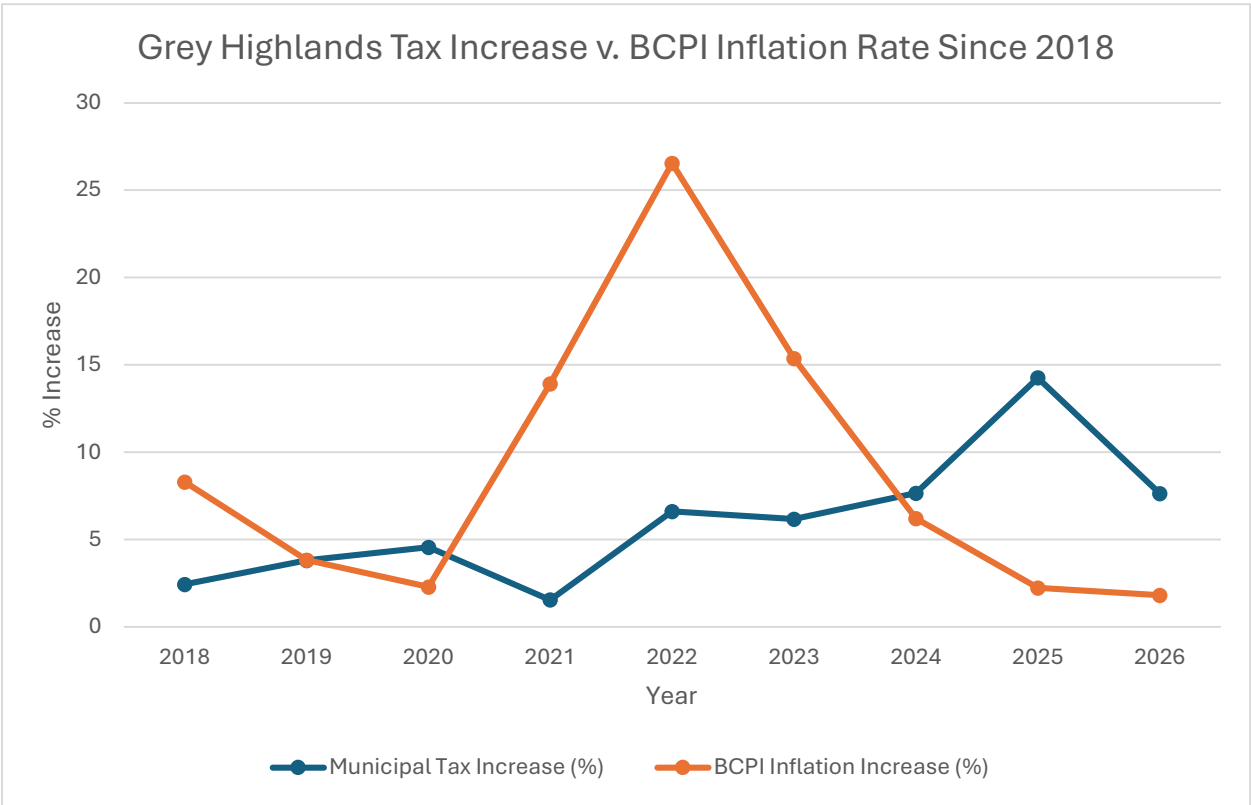
Second, I'd like to take this opportunity discuss the issues facing us youth in Grey Highlands. We need to be making targeted investments in retaining our youth here in Grey Highlands. Grey Highlands has been home to my family and friends for decades and I – and I imagine most of us youth – want to stay and raise our future families here the same way our parent's and grandparents did. Unfortunately, we cannot. There simply are not enough houses, jobs, or entrepreneurial opportunities for us to afford to stay.

I'd like to put the reality of the situation into perspective for you. In the past three and a half decades we have seen the cost of housing go up by nearly five times, while there are half as many units on the market ([Source](#)). Right now, Grey Highlands only has ~15 homes in it which cost under \$500,000 ([Source](#)). Furthermore, the Federal and Provincial programs which once helped our parents and grandparents afford their first homes are gone. In order to get a decent interest rate I on these 15 homes I would need to have \$100,000 saved up for a down payment ([Source](#)).

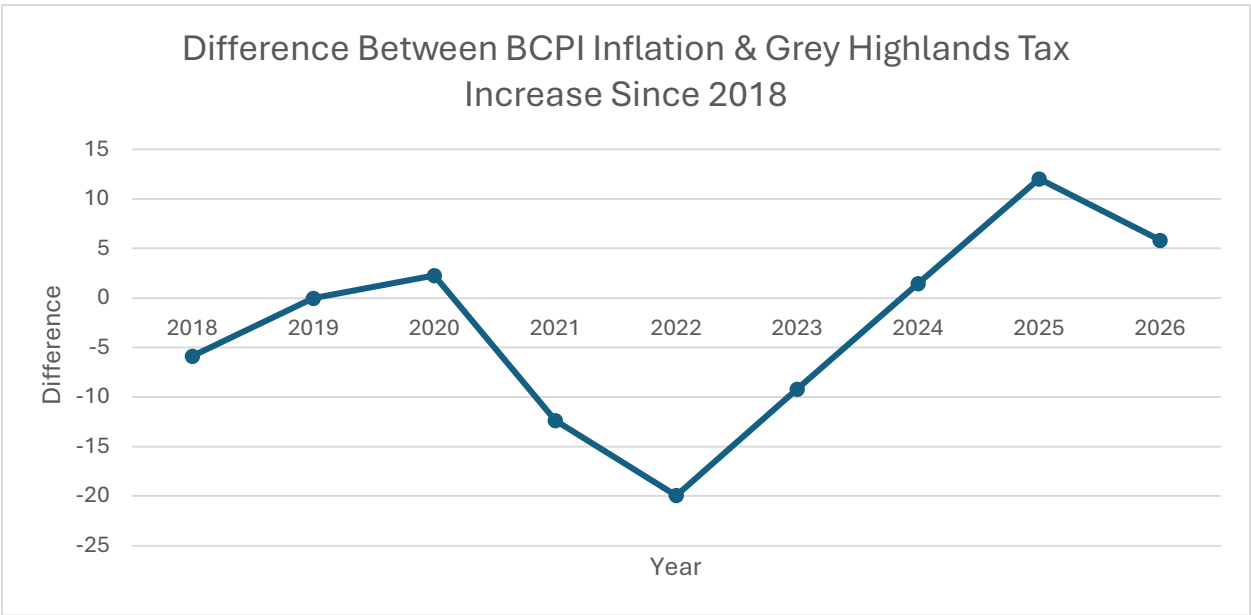
However, the job situation in Grey Highlands makes that nearly impossible to save. There are less than 300 jobs available in Grey Highlands within a 50km radius, of these, less than a quarter pay a living wage ([Source](#)).

Allow me to put this another way. How can our community and rural identity continue to survive with only 15 homes and 50 jobs for a population of 2000 to 3000 Grey Highlands Youth? It cannot. If we do not do something, anything, we will be forced to leave and the communities which we have loved and grown up in will wither and die. If we do not make the necessary investments today, we will not have a Grey Highlands tomorrow.

Appendix A:



Appendix B:



DAVE MESLIN RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

FRIENDS OF LAKE EUGENIA QUESTIONNAIRE

Answers from Dave Meslin:

Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?

If I'm elected to council, I'll watch your hard-earned dollars the same way I watch my own. The annual budget process should be participatory, transparent and thorough.

Here are six specific things I'd like to see:

- **Benchmarking:** Council needs accurate comparative data to make good decisions. For example, someone might ask "*Are we spending too much on our vehicle fleet?*" One way to answer that question is to look at other comparable municipalities and see if they are spending more or less, on average. This is called "*Benchmarking*" and it's a fundamental tool for responsible budgeting. This data is greatly lacking right now in Grey Highlands.
- **Data Visualisation:** Raw numbers are hard to understand, until they're turned into graphs and charts! This is crucial for council members - but also

members of the public. Everyone has a right to see where their money is going.

- **Online tools for Public Participation.** Charts and Graphs are great... but not if they're buried in a staff report! Citizens deserve an easy-to-understand web portal that explains the Grey Highlands budget.

(Local resident Mike Barcz has made his own website -TrackMyTax.ca - which is a great example of what the municipality should be doing.

- **Curbing Consultant Contracts.** A large chunk of your tax dollars are spent on outside consultants. In my opinion, some of these reports are unnecessary and some are redundant. Most reports are so long that no one even reads them. The end result is that many reports simply gather dust, and the recommendations are ignored. That's not a good use of your hard-earned dollars.

- **Asking tough questions, on big-ticket items.** The easiest way to save tax dollars is to look at the most expensive projects, and ask: "Do we really need to do this?" For example, I do not support the proposed \$3 million water system rebuild for Kimberley, nor the proposed multi-million bridge reconstructions on Sideroad 7A.

- **Tapping into citizen expertise:** Some municipalities in Ontario have a Budget Advisory Committee composed of local residents who have a background in fiscal management. If we have local expertise in our community, why not put it to work? Appointing an advisory committee

would assist Council with budget deliberations and help guide the decisions that affect each and every one of us.

What capital improvements are you prioritizing?

Personally, I believe we are overspending on our capital budget for roads and I believe we are underspending on important things like community centres, playgrounds, main street revitalisation, heritage, tourism and conservation.

Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth?

Nothing that I'm aware of. But I'm always open to new ideas and opportunities.

What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?

I am opposed to any plan of subdivision on the lower Talisman lands. The valley is a sacred natural space, and deserves protection. I believe that new population growth should be focussed in Markdale, where the infrastructure already exists.

The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection

program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished?

If the fertilizer ban and the septic inspections are working well and have clear benefits, then yes of course I would support an extension of both programs.

Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, "We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage." Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?

I do agree that water flows downhill, of course. However, my understanding is that the Friends of Lake Eugenia have not proposed to re-route the culvert, but simply to raise it higher. This could provide a holding area which would serve as a settling pond. This idea makes sense to me, and I would ask staff to explore it.

A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached.

My approach would be to bring together community leaders from the Friends group and the EDCIA and facilitate a discussion that looks at various options for funding, revenue sharing, external grants and municipal funding. We need a community-driven process, for a Made-In-Eugenia solution.

Are there any other statements you wish to make?

I used to live in Eugenia, so the lake holds a dear place in my heart. I want to congratulate and thank the good folks at Friends of Lake Eugenia. Community leaders like Morgan and Doug keep our communities alive and engaged. The democratic process is richer when residents participate - and lead.

DAVE RUSSELL RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your important questions regarding our community and our Lake and for your interest in my response as a candidate for council in the upcoming election.

I look forward to learning more and discussing many further details that we will be bound to address in the future.

If there are further questions or inquiries, please send them along to me for consideration and response.

My thoughts are as follows,

- **Friends of the Lake Question-**

- **1. Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?**

-

- **answer-**

- **Grey Highland's continuing tax increases are part of the inflation problem locally. Therefore it is my view and my target that taxes must NOT continue to increase at any rate exorbitant or otherwise in the near term future.**
- **Furthermore I would propose to actively manage responsible development by first recognizing and reestablishing that we are currently and traditionally a collection of amalgamated rural communities and that investments toward an "urban economic model" is an unwise transition to make. I do not support the urbanization of our municipality, economically or otherwise. In my opinion, any council or administrative official who would suggest a transition to "Urban Economic Model" would be suggesting an egregious error of judgment for our collective future.**

-

- **2. Friends of the Lake Question-**

- **What capital improvements are you prioritizing.**

-

- **answer ~**

- **Each of our amalgamated regions have a recreational arena. They are the cardinal points of our community's valuable assets. Once they are all brought back into form as useable assets after recent disaster and/or mismanagement, thought and Capital Investments should be proposed under close managerial scrutiny in regard to cost/benefit analysis , to attract greater numbers of people to their use and hence higher revenue returns by way of user fees and the enjoyment through expansion and greater availability of activities**

-

- **3. Friends of the Lake Questions-**
- **Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth? What**
- **What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?**
-
- **Answers-**
- **I foresee and would opine that that tourism and the flow of tourism dollars into the municipality is an area where public/private partnerships are somewhat in evidence but could, and should be explored thoroughly and encouraged.**
- **I read recently that the Talisman parcel is now under the stewardship of the Bruce Trail association. Being an avid hiker and user of the trail, I generally extend my love and accolades to them. Having said that, with the limited knowledge I have of their plans of the complete and final demolition of the existing infrastructure there, I am disappointed. And in answering your question of my expectations. I would expect better in terms of vision and long term sustainable planning from the Bruce Trail Directors.**
-
- **4. Friends of the Lake Question-**
- **The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program. Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties? How will this be accomplished?**
-
- **Answer- Yes the fertilizer ban should be continued into perpetuity. The Lake Task Force is an important group of volunteers undertaking and overseeing a very important body of work and my support is with them entirely.**
- **Yesterday, Labour Day Monday, I solo kayaked approximately 25 kilometres of the lake's 28 point something total shoreline. Upon observing the beauty and in some areas, less than beautiful condition of the lake, and after speaking with many lakefront property owners, and residents, the established fertilizer ban evidently and anecdotally, is not being universally complied with. I would support the fertilizer ban and extend it to include any and all pesticides, herbicides and any salting of the roadway and driveways around or crossing the lake as the sodium chloride (salt) has a deleterious effect on the health of the lake. Sand should replace the use of salt near the lake.**
- **Salt water is heavier than fresh water and sinks to the bottom and kills the organisms that eat and prevent algae bloom, the nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium propagates algae bloom.**
- **As far as the septic inspections of the recent seasons, it was related to me that the data collected thus far at the expense of the property owners is information that is and should already be on file in municipal septic inspection records and is therefore redundant in many cases. Many property owners also have the documentation regarding their installation inspection on file which could be provided upon request at no charge. In the event of properties where there is no record of the installation schematics by the municipality or the owner, close examination and inspection**

should be undertaken to ensure they are functioning to a high standard toward protecting the lake.

- How? This should be principally undertaken by notifications to the public and community awareness that any use of chemical lawn care products, road salt or any other pollutants is highly irresponsible and contributes to any decline in the general health of the lake. Hence potential decline in property values and the enjoyment of the lake and its ecosystems.
- In my view, Penalties for breach of an extensive ban on pollutants should be in place.
-
- 5. Friends of the Lake Question- Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, “We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage.” Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?
-
- Answer- First, from the director of Transportation and Public Spaces and council’s condescending statements, I would request a map of the gps locations of any and all culverts and other flows leading to and draining surface water into the lake. I would view the locations in person (some of which I observed yesterday via kayak) and research the topographical and hydro geological maps of the upstream courses of those water flows to investigate the potential sources of nutrient enrichment. (Water samples should be taken in mid summer at all locations and tested for salinity and chemical content) Then I would research any and all possible mitigating actions that could reasonably be taken to reduce the free flow of contaminants into the lake.
- I would support a cooperative agreement with residents and the municipality to undertake this vision and work toward its fruition.
-
- 6. Friends of the Lake Question -
- A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached.
-

- **Answer- At the time of composing this answer I have been unable to open the MOU attachment, so cannot speak directly to its terms and frame of reference but it comes to mind from my experience at the lake yesterday and many other times at the launch and beach that the majority of the people and families with their boats and vehicles there were not local residents and I would submit that in addition to the ramp fees, there could also be a small parking fee charged to non residents which would enhance the revenue stream and provide income to offset the energy costs of operating the oxygenator pump. Also, in the interest of a healthy lake that provides water for hydroelectric generation, one would surmise that OPG should and would willingly provide a subsidy or rebate toward the cost of its energy requirements.**
- **It sounds to me like the MOU could be enhanced to facilitate higher revenues and hence equitable profit sharing between the EDCIA and the Friends of Lake Eugenia.**
- **Both groups should be able to increase the revenues available to them and enhance projects in the broader Eugenia community to further promote those enhancements.**
-
- **Friends of the Lake Question-**
- **Are there any other statements you wish to make?**
-
- Yes, there are many other statements I'd like to make, but in the interests of brevity, I would just like to note that councillor Dubyk who is not running for reelection is also a representative of the committee and portfolio of environmental matters.
- I kayaked to the oxygenator yesterday and after observation, my opinion which was shared by many that I spoke to is that it has had a noted positive effect on water quality.
- The fact that zero monetary contribution by Grey Highlands municipal council to the oxygenator is further evidence of the need for change in our local leaders. I hope to be a part of that change.
- I applaud, give my respect to, and congratulate everyone who contributed, researched, fundraised and worked very hard to bring this project into being. It is a huge step forward, and is a reflection of the strength of a community that comes together with a clear vision of the future. A job well done.
-
- If and when I am elected my goal is to be appointed into the space left by councillor Dubyk's departure from council and also to the Heritage committee to better enhance and expedite the work and understanding of these important matters that are very dear and critical to our near and long term future.
- Thank you for sending me this questionnaire and for the opportunity to speak upon these inquiries.
- It will be a great honour in the course of my life experience to work with, and for our community to help provide for its health, abundance and prosperity long into the future.
- Many thanks again,
- Sincerely,
- Dave Russell

SANDY THORNTON RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

Friends of Lake Eugenia Candidate Questions – Responses from Sandy Thornton

We would appreciate your response to the following questions.

Grey Highlands taxes continue to increase at a rate that far exceeds inflation. How do you propose to actively manage responsible development to fund the transition that is moving the Municipality into a more urban economic model?

I think responsible development starts with **making sure developers pay their fair share**, rather than putting all the cost of growth on existing taxpayers.

Grey Highlands is facing significant infrastructure needs, and our 2026 budget included a 5.9% municipal tax increase. At the same time, we are planning for growth, particularly in Markdale, including expanded wastewater infrastructure.

As development moves forward, I would support using charges and other growth-related tools to ensure that developers contribute appropriately to the infrastructure and services that are needed.

But responsible development is also about **where and how we grow**. We should encourage growth in our existing settlement areas, where infrastructure and services can support it, rather than creating costly new infrastructure in areas that are difficult or expensive to service.

I would also want Council to consider the long-term operating costs of new infrastructure—not just the upfront cost.

Growth can strengthen our tax base and support local businesses, but it needs to be planned carefully. My focus would be on **growth that is financially sustainable**, protects the character of our communities, and doesn't leave existing taxpayers carrying an unfair share of the bill.

What capital improvements are you prioritizing?

For me, the priority is simple: maintain what we have, address the highest-risk infrastructure first, and make sure new investment is financially sustainable for the long term.

We need to maintain and renew the infrastructure we already depend on before taking on new commitments.

That means roads, bridges and culverts, water and wastewater systems, and the equipment needed to maintain them. These are the foundations of our community and our economy.

Friends of Lake Eugenia Candidate Questions – Responses from Sandy Thornton

Grey Highlands has a significant infrastructure need, so I think Council needs to use our Asset Management Plan to prioritize projects based on condition, risk, public safety and, importantly, the cost of delaying the work.

Council also needs to focus on infrastructure that supports responsible growth. For example, expanding the Markdale wastewater system is crucial for that community's ability to accommodate future development. I would want to make sure developers pay their fair share for growth-related infrastructure through development charges and other available sources, rather than putting the burden on current taxpayers.

And finally, I would look for every opportunity to leverage provincial and federal funding before asking local taxpayers to fund major capital projects.

Do you foresee any public/private partnerships that could lead to economic growth? What do you expect from development of the Talisman parcel?

For me, the goal is responsible economic development—not development at any cost. I would want to work with the property owner, the County, conservation authorities and the community to find a balance that creates economic opportunity while protecting what makes the Beaver Valley special.

I'm open to public-private partnerships where they make sense for Grey Highlands and where there is a clear benefit to the community.

Partnerships can help us bring investment, tourism, employment and new services to the municipality without putting the entire financial burden on taxpayers. But any partnership needs to have clear objectives, appropriate agreements and a good understanding of the long-term costs to the municipality.

The Talisman lands present an economic development opportunity,, but we need to abide by the planning process.

The current development proposal for the former Talisman lands includes recreation and mixed-use, residential, future development and significant natural-heritage/open-space areas.

While I support the opportunities this would bring, I would expect developers to respect the environmental sensitivity of the area, protect the watershed and natural heritage, and be consistent with the municipality's planning policies.

Friends of Lake Eugenia Candidate Questions – Responses from Sandy Thornton

The Lake Task Force is set to sunset in early 2027. The Task Force has been instrumental in establishing a fertilizer ban and in testing a septic inspection program.

- Do you support extending the fertilizer ban and making an improved septic system inspection program required for lake properties?

Yes, I support stronger measures to protect the water quality of our lakes, but I think they need to be practical, evidence-based, communicated in a timely manner and fairly implemented.

Grey Highlands already has its Inland Lakes and Water Quality By-law to regulate fertilizer use around our lakes. I would support extending those protections where there is good evidence that they would help protect water quality.

I also support the current improved septic inspection program for lake properties. Septic systems are an important part of protecting groundwater and lake water quality, particularly around our lakes where many properties rely on private systems. If we have a by-law to support septic inspections at regular intervals on the lake, we should support and enforce this requirement.

But inspections and repairs can be costly. I would want Council to make the program affordable, , communicate clearly with residents, and phase in requirements where appropriate.

How will this be accomplished?

My approach would be: set clear standards, give residents a reasonable path to comply, monitor the results, and adjust the program based on the evidence.

Grey Highlands already has a fertilizer by-law for our inland lakes, so the first step would be to review water-quality data and find out whether it needs to be strengthened.

I support continuing a septic system inspection program for lake properties, with clear requirements and reasonable timelines. Allowing qualified third-party inspectors to conduct these inspections can provide property owners with more options.

Council should look at the cost and implementation of the program before setting requirements. It should establish clear inspection intervals, give property owners adequate notice and time to comply and consider whether it could provide financial assistance or other supports for repairs. .

Most importantly, I would want the municipality to measure the results. We should continue monitoring lake water quality and report those results publicly so residents can see whether these measures are making a difference. Grey Highlands has already expanded

Friends of Lake Eugenia Candidate Questions – Responses from Sandy Thornton

its Lake Eugenia water-quality monitoring program and committed to public reporting and an annual report to Council.

Friends of Lake Eugenia has requested that the Grey Highlands Council and the Grey Highlands Transportation and Public Spaces Department develop a plan to address direct culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia, which provides nutrient input to the lake and leads to blue-green algae growth. The most recent response, received in July 2026, came from a Grey Highlands Council person and the Director of Transportation and Public Spaces, who told us, “We had to understand that water flows downhill and that they intend to do nothing about culvert drainage.” Do you concur with this statement, or would you support a cooperative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to address this documented problem? How would you proceed?

No, I do not concur with this statement. We may not be able to stop water from flowing downhill, but we can absolutely work together to manage what that water carries into the lake.

We can manage how that water enters the lake and reduce the nutrients and sediment it carries with it. The municipality is already responsible for stormwater infrastructure, including culverts, and has done drainage studies in Eugenia.

I would bring the municipality, Friends of Lake Eugenia, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and affected residents together to identify specific culverts and understand what is entering the lake.

The next step would be to develop a plan that includes options such as vegetated buffers, erosion and sediment controls, settling areas or other measures before runoff reaches the lake.

There is already work underway through the Lake Management Task Force and the enhanced water-quality monitoring program. The Task Force is looking at nutrient loading and water quality, and the municipality has committed to enhanced phosphorus and microcystin testing at Lake Eugenia.

I would support a co-operative agreement with Lake Eugenia residents to develop and implement that plan, with clear responsibilities and measurable outcomes.

A community organization has been formed (registration details have not been provided) to collect fees at the boat ramp. The organization, the Eugenia District Community Improvement Association (EDCIA), operates under a Memorandum of Understanding that will expire in December 2026. Under this MOU, the EDCIA keeps all proceeds, and the Municipality covers most maintenance expenses. The EDCIA does not use the fees

Friends of Lake Eugenia Candidate Questions – Responses from Sandy Thornton

collected to improve water quality in Lake Eugenia. Do you support the continuation of this MOU, or would you consider a revenue-sharing arrangement to help offset the operating costs of the water quality improvement system? A copy of this MOU is attached.

I think the upcoming expiry of the MOU provides an opportunity to review the arrangement and make sure it is working in the best interests of the community.

If the Municipality is covering most of the operating and maintenance costs associated with the boat ramp, I think it is reasonable to ask whether the revenue generated from the ramp should contribute to those costs.

I would want to understand the full financial picture before deciding exactly what the new agreement should look like. But I would certainly be open to a revenue-sharing arrangement, with a portion of the fees helping offset municipal operating costs and, where appropriate, supporting water-quality initiatives in Lake Eugenia.

I also think there needs to be transparency around the fees collected, the costs incurred by the Municipality, and how any shared revenue would be used.

I would bring the Municipality, the EDCIA, Lake Eugenia residents and other relevant stakeholders together before the MOU expires to review the arrangement and develop a new agreement with clear responsibilities and measurable outcomes.

For me, this isn't about taking revenue away from a community organization. It's about making sure that when residents and visitors pay a fee to use a municipal facility, the arrangement is fair, transparent and contributes to maintaining both the facility and the health of the lake.

Are there any other statements you wish to make?

After 16 years of living here, I understand why people are so passionate about protecting what makes this place special. We have beautiful natural areas, strong agricultural communities, vibrant small towns and hamlets. We're fortunate to have people who care and want to get involved in decision-making.

Whether we're talking about protecting our lakes and natural heritage, managing growth, investing in infrastructure or keeping taxes sustainable, I believe Council needs to balance today's needs with the long-term interests of our community.

I would bring a thoughtful, practical and community-minded voice to Council, along with my experience in managing budgets, competing priorities and working collaboratively.

Friends of Lake Eugenia Candidate Questions – Responses from Sandy Thornton

Most importantly, I want residents to know that I will listen, do my homework, and make decisions that build a strong and sustainable future for Grey Highlands.

DAN WICKENS RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

dghmanagement@yahoo.com

From: Dan Wickens <danwickens63@gmail.com>
Sent: September 28, 2026 7:37 PM
To: dghmanagement@yahoo.com
Cc: Andrea Edwards; Colleen Hill; Dane Nielsen; Dave Meslin; David Clarke; Don Alp; James Black; Katrina Wood; Mark Brown; Morgan Anderson; Paul Allen; Paul McQueen; Stephen Patrick Maloney
Subject: Re: FW: FRIENDS OF LAKE EUGENIA ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

I get it. I am a taxpayer too. I realize taxes have gone up so has everything else we've had two hard winters. We had. to do a lot of extra winter maintenance. Every budget cycle I look for ways to save money. I had a few ideas about turning some Paved roads back to gravel, which cost us approximately half million dollars per 2 km council saw otherwise, there was new equipment to purchase Some we needed some I didn't think we did. Some of my suggestions got taken up and some others got Denied.. as a municipality. We are not immune to price increases and since Covid, we have seen everything go up some of it Double, machine Parts have gone through the roof. As for staff, I think we need a third-party to look at staff Numbers and wages.

As for Capital improvements I think we need to get on top of our arenas and our municipal buildings We did a building assessment two years ago. I think they only did a half ass job. It cost us 150,000. I've voted against it council passed it put it through and when we got the building assessment back, I asked staff so when something on the building building assessment Comes up what do we do ?Staff says we will send staff out to look at it. Staff are in these buildings every day. They should see something that is not right building assessment did identify the roof at the Artemesia yard using some sort of insulation that went wet turns acidic and rotted the roof that just cost us \$268,000 apparently building assessments don't save you too much money.

Not in favour of public private deal for the Talisman lands.

As for the culvert in question on Plantts point Road The water in question comes out of a naturalized area I cannot see how this can be contributing to the blue green algae problem in Lake Eugenia. This year the blue green algae problem has been minimum but we have seen no evidence of blue green algae being a problem throughout the province this year.

As for the boat launch, the money that is gathered pay the people that run the boat launch they get minimum wage for the time that they spend there.

I support the MOU as it stands

Thanks
Dan Wickens.

From: dghmanagement@yahoo.com
Sent: September 29, 2026 5:16 PM
To: Andrea Edwards (pandorabox.com@gmail.com); Blake Martin (bbarwick269@gmail.com); Colleen Hill; Dane Nielsen (nielsen_dane@hotmail.com); danwickens63@gmail.com; Dave Meslin (dave@davemeslin.ca); David Clarke (davidgclarke53@gmail.com); David Russell (preceptorysongs@aol.com); Don Alp (donmalp@gmail.com); Emmett Ferguson (ferguson4ghcouncil@gmail.com); James Black (jamesblackforgh@gmail.com); Janet Carson (jbatchcarson@gmail.com); Joel Loughhead (joel.loughhead@gmail.com); Katrina Wood (hello@katforcouncil.ca); Mark Brown (mark@markbrownformayor.ca); Morgan Anderson; Paul Allen (paul.allen.gh@gmail.com); Paul McQueen (paulmcqueen@hotmail.com); Sandra (Sandy) Thornton (sandythornton@yahoo.com); Stephen Patrick Maloney (smaloney@spmaloneycorp.com); Tom Allwood (tallwoodjr@hotmail.com); Xerxes Khalkhaly (xerxes1realtor@gmail.com)
Cc: 'Joel Harrison'
Subject: FW: FW: FRIENDS OF LAKE EUGENIA ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE
Attachments: Favot et al. 2023. Cyanobacterial blooms in Ontario.pdf; Winter et al. 2011. Algal blooms in Ontario, Canada - increases in reports since 1994.pdf

Today, Counsellor Wickens minimized the work done at Lake Eugenia by stating, “This year the blue-green algae problem has been minimal, but we have seen no evidence of blue-green algae being a problem throughout the province this year.”

I try to remain neutral in collecting and distributing questionnaire responses; however, in this case, it is a complete misstatement of facts.

Please see Dr. Harrison’s reply below.

Thank you.

Doug Hill

From: Joel Harrison <joel.harrison@environmentalsciences.ca>
Sent: September 29, 2026 3:38 PM
To: dghmanagement@yahoo.com
Subject: Re: FW: FRIENDS OF LAKE EUGENIA ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Hi Doug,

To my knowledge, there is no annual reporting from the MECP or the health units on the relative severity of algal blooms from year to year (at least not on an annual basis - they do publish journal articles from time to time - see attached).

But as I mentioned, having sampled both Belwood Lake and Lake Eugenia this summer, the latter had much clearer water - Belwood Lake took on a "pea soup" consistency late in the summer (presumably due to the anoxic hypolimnion and internal P loading, both of which we measured at a weekly frequency in 2026).

I would not agree with the statement below that "we have seen no evidence of blue green algae being a problem throughout the province this year" - a quick internet search shows that a number of lakes both north and south of Eugenia had blooms reported in 2026 (note that this is not an exhaustive list).



Date	Lake	URL
2026-09-01	Belwood Lake	https://www.grandriver.ca/news/posts/blue-green-algae-and-grca-reservoirs-4/
2026-09-04	Shade's Mills Cons. Area reservoir	https://www.grandriver.ca/news/posts/update-blue-green-algae-and-grca-reservoirs-5/
2026-09-17	Guelph Lake Cons. Area reservoir	https://www.grandriver.ca/news/posts/update-blue-green-algae-and-grca-reservoirs-6/

2026-06-25 Stewart Lake
2026-07-09 Sparrow Lake
2026-09-24 Silver Lake
2026-07-28 Three Mile Lake

<https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/SafeWater/bluegreenalgae.aspx>
<https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/SafeWater/bluegreenalgae.aspx>
<https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/SafeWater/bluegreenalgae.aspx>
<https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/SafeWater/bluegreenalgae.aspx>

Cheers,
Joel

Joel Harrison, Ph.D.
Senior Aquatic Scientist
705-801-8448
www.environmentalsciences.ca



KATRINA WOOD RESPONSE-CANDIDATE FOR COUNSELOR

From: Katrina Wood <Hello@katforcouncil.ca>
Sent: September 25, 2026 2:07 PM
To: dghmanagement@yahoo.com <dghmanagement@yahoo.com>
Subject: Re: FRIENDS OF LAKE EUGENIA ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for taking the time to send these questions. They touch on several issues that I believe will be very important for the next Council.

Taxes and responsible development

I don't believe continued tax increases can simply be the default answer to every challenge we face. At the same time, growth requires infrastructure, and that infrastructure has a cost.

For me, responsible development means making sure growth contributes appropriately to the infrastructure it requires rather than continually shifting those costs onto existing taxpayers. We should be looking closely at development charges, grants, partnerships and other funding opportunities, while also examining municipal spending and asking where we can operate more efficiently.

I am not opposed to growth. I am opposed to growth without a clear understanding of what it will cost the community long term, whether our infrastructure can support it, and who will ultimately be paying for it.

Capital improvements

My priority would be maintaining and improving the infrastructure and assets we already have: roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, community facilities and the municipal assets our residents depend on.

I believe strongly in maintaining what we have before automatically looking to replace or expand it. Capital decisions also need to consider the full lifecycle cost, not simply the initial price tag.

We need to be willing to distinguish between what we need, what would be nice to have, and what we can realistically afford.

Public/private partnerships and Talisman

I am open to public/private partnerships where there is a clear benefit to the community, appropriate accountability, and the public interest is protected.

When it comes to Talisman, however, my position is much clearer. I do not support development of the Talisman parcel.

I believe the Beaver Valley is something we should be protecting, not looking at as the next opportunity for large-scale growth. Development there raises significant concerns around roads, water, wastewater, traffic and environmental impact in an area that does not have the infrastructure to support that kind of growth.

It also does very little, in my view, to address the housing and affordability challenges facing the people who already live and work in Grey Highlands.

There are places where responsible growth makes sense. I don't believe Talisman is one of them. Some places are worth protecting for future generations, and for me, the Beaver Valley is one of those places.

Lake Eugenia, the Lake Task Force, fertilizer and septic inspections

What stands out to me about Lake Eugenia is how much the community itself has already done to address the health of the lake.

Residents have organized, raised significant funds, supported scientific research and taken an active role in pursuing solutions to the blue-green algae problem. I think that level of community commitment should be recognized and supported.

At the same time, I think it is fair to ask what role the Municipality should play.

I support continuing the work of protecting Lake Eugenia beyond the scheduled end of the current Task Force. I also support measures addressing known sources of nutrient loading into the lake, including fertilizer use and septic systems.

Before determining exactly what a permanent septic inspection program should look like, I would want to understand what was learned through the pilot program and use the monitoring data and appropriate environmental expertise to make that decision. But I do believe we need to continue moving forward rather than allowing the work to end when the Task Force sunsets.

If residents are investing substantial amounts of their own money and time into protecting Lake Eugenia, the Municipality should also be looking seriously at the things within its own control that may contribute to the problem.

Culvert drainage into Lake Eugenia

I would not be comfortable accepting "water flows downhill" as the end of the conversation if there is documented evidence that drainage is contributing nutrients to Lake Eugenia.

Of course water flows downhill. The important question is what that water is carrying with it and whether there are reasonable ways to reduce its impact before it reaches the lake.

I would support bringing residents, municipal staff and appropriate environmental expertise together to look at the evidence and potential solutions.

That doesn't mean committing taxpayers to an expensive project before understanding the engineering, effectiveness or cost. It means being willing to investigate the issue properly and determine what can reasonably be done.

Considering the work and investment residents have already put into protecting the lake, I think looking for opportunities for the Municipality and community to work together is entirely reasonable.

Boat launch MOU and revenue sharing

Before deciding whether the existing MOU should continue, I would want to review the agreement carefully along with the actual revenue being collected, the expenses being paid by the Municipality, and the responsibilities of each party.

My starting point is fairly simple: if the Municipality is carrying a significant portion of the operating or maintenance costs of a municipal asset while another organization retains the revenue generated from it, Council should understand the rationale for that arrangement and determine whether it continues to represent fair value for taxpayers.

I would absolutely consider a revenue-sharing arrangement, particularly if some of those funds could be directed toward Lake Eugenia water-quality initiatives.

Given the amount of work and fundraising residents are already undertaking to protect the lake, I think it is reasonable to ask whether revenue being generated at the lake could help support that work.

Again, I would want to see the financial information and understand the existing agreement before deciding exactly what that model should look like.

Anything else

One of the reasons I am running for Council is because I believe we need to be willing to have these conversations and ask difficult questions.

Lake Eugenia is actually a good example of what I believe community can look like. Residents saw a problem, organized, invested their own time and money, sought out expertise and worked toward a solution.

I believe municipal government should recognize that kind of initiative and ask, "How can we work together?" rather than automatically responding with reasons something cannot be done.

Grey Highlands is growing, but we are also a rural municipality with aging infrastructure, incredible natural assets, small communities with their own identities, and residents who cannot be expected to absorb unlimited tax increases.

I don't believe the answer is to stop growth, and I don't believe the answer is growth at any cost. We need to be much more intentional about where growth makes sense, what infrastructure is required to support it, what it will cost over the long term, who pays for it, and what we risk losing in the process.

I also won't pretend to have every answer before I have all of the information. I think part of responsible leadership is being able to say, "I need to understand this better," rather than giving people an answer simply because it sounds good.

What I can promise is that I will listen, ask questions, look at the evidence and be willing to challenge decisions when I don't believe they make sense for the long-term interests of Grey Highlands.

Thank you again for reaching out, for asking thoughtful questions, and for being engaged in our community.

Katrina Wood

Candidate for Grey Highlands Council