

# Metropolitan Utilities District

**Chris Ansell** (Republican)      **Tim Cavanaugh** (Republican)      **Gwen Howard** (Democrat)  
**Kelly Koepsell** (Republican)      **Don Kroupa** (Republican)      **Mike McGowan** (Republican)  
 Vote for 2

### Question List:

Other	Development	Responsibility	Governing	Personal/Political	Anything else?
Biographical	Utility issue	Utility Business	documents	Abortion/capital	
Motivation	Committees	Connections	Personal Story	punishment/etc.	
Qualifications	Checks and Balances	Security	Constitution	Homosexuality	
Sustainable	Environmental		Family	Past President	

### Other - Information about making contact with the candidate.

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	Contacted by resident of the district. 3/13 - 7:50 P.M. - left message, 3/14 - 8:35 A.M. - Returned call, said to send questionnaire. 3/17 - 9:45 A.M. - candidate called with questions. Answers copied from email response received, Wed, Mar 19, 2014 10:01 am.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	Incumbent. Contacted by resident of the district. 3/13 - 7:52 P.M. - left message on home phone, 3/14 P.M. - left message. 3/15 - 11:36 A.M. - left message, 7:15 P.M. - returned call and asked that I email questionnaire, 7:45 P.M. - sent questionnaire. 3/18 - 11:32A - Sent Follow up email. 3/20 - 9:28 - Sent follow-up email with questions attached, 10:46A - candidate sent email that he mailed his answers because he couldn't get email to work. Answers copied from mailed response received 3/20/14.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	Contacted on behalf of a resident of the district. Calling attempts 3/13, 3/13, 3/15, asked for mailed questionnaire, sent. 3/19 verifying receipt of mailed questionnaire. Emailing attempts: 3/19, 3/26, 3/27. Candidate said working on it. Reminder messages: 4/1, 4/2, 4/5. 4/10, 8:40pm, said had mailed it. Emailed questionnaire again. Answers copied from email response received 4/11, 6:33am.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	Contacted by resident of the district. 3/15 - Since none of us could find a telephone #, I sent a snail mail letter. 3/18 - contacted on Facebook, from which phone number acquired. 3/19 - 12:21P - Called to verify he had received the letter. Said he is also running for MCC Board and was sending combined answers for both questionnaires. Answers copied from emailed response received 3/19, 12:35pm.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	Contacted by resident of the district. 3/13 - 7:59 P.M. - Called. He said he was in a meeting and could talk with me after 11:00 A.M. Friday. 3/14 - 11:15 A.M. - Called sand he asked me to email questionnaire which I did. 3/17 - 8:07 P.M. - Sent follow up email. 3/20 - 9:33A - Sent 2nd Follow up email; attached the questions. Answers copied from email response received 3/29/14, 10:00am.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	Contacted by resident of the district. 3/13 - 7:57 P.M. - left message, 3/14 - 4:31 P.M. - Returned my call and asked that I email questionnaire which I did. 3/17 - 8:07 P.M. - Sent follow-up email to verify he'd received the questionnaire. Responded that he had and was working on it. Answers copied from email response received Wed, 19 Mar 2014, 2:15pm.

### Biographical - Please include biographical information you consider important for voters to know and/or reference your website.

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	My name is Chris Ansell I'm a local business over of 12 years in the Omaha Metro. I'm a hard working self-made business owner with experience. I know what it takes and am willing to go the extra mile. My company web site is <a href="http://www.reasonablelawncare.com">www.reasonablelawncare.com</a>
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	I'm 57 years-old. Lifelong Omahan, 15-years on MUD Board. Master of Science Degree, Bachelor of Science Degree, attended Law School, Graduate of FBI National Academy. Ryan High School Graduate. Retired Omaha police Captain, 26 years. Currently chief deputy Douglas County Treasure, appointed, 8th year. President-elect, Downtown Rotary. Durham Society member, member of Omaha Sports Hall of Fame Board, Patriot Guard Rider.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	Former Nebraska State Senator, retired adoption specialist.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	I hold two masters degrees, and am presently enrolled in the UNO Master of Public Administration program. I am a disabled military veteran, with over 20 years of service. I believe that service to one's fellow citizen is something that is required of every citizen. Some choose to assist physically, or financially. I choose to serve by providing leadership and stability as a member of the MUD Board of Governors.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	Don Kroupa 12241 Nicholas Street Omaha, NE 68154 I am married, and I have three children. I own Don Kroupa Insurance Agency, and am a lifelong Omaha resident.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	-Retired -Married for 40 years. Have 5 children and 5 grandchildren -Catholic and an active member of St. Wenceslaus church. - Longtime Omaha resident and active in the community.

### Motivation - What has motivated you to seek this office? What do you hope to accomplish?

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	Large rate increases over the last 3 years 7.9% this year alone between gas and water, underfunded healthcare and pension plans, Large debt servicing costs the district 16.9 million this year alone and infrastructure projects costing over 47 million this year.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	I love public service. My grandfather and his brother worked at MUD for 37 years each. My father was a Board member for 15 years.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	I am motivated by a continued desire to represent taxpayers. My goal is to deliver government that is open and transparent, operates efficiently and avoids spikes in customer rates.

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Motivation - What has motivated you to seek this office? What do you hope to accomplish? (continued from above)

- Kelly Koepsell** I simply want to serve my fellow citizens. My goals in this position are to keep MUD a public enterprise, and to secure the availability of the utility to continue to serve its customers at a continued rate equitable to the great service MUD has provided in the past and is providing today.
- Don Kroupa** I enjoyed serving the MUD customers during my 18 years previously on the board and I feel that my experience would help to ensure that natural gas and water rates continue to be among the lowest in the Midwest.
- Mike McGowan** I previously served on the MUD Board and would like to serve the Omaha ratepayers once again. I worked hard and will once again work hard to continue MUD's excellent record of providing safe and reliable water and natural gas service at the lowest possible costs. I know the utility business and would like to put my knowledge and experience to work for Omaha ratepayers.

Qualifications - What three qualifications do you bring to this office?

- Chris Ansell** I've run my own business successful business for over 12 years in Omaha. I have education in accounting and business finances. I'm hard working, motivated, and passionate about MUD. I currently serve on the North Omaha Commercial Club Board and am an active member of Kiwanis.
- Tim Cavanaugh** The ability to work as a team member to accomplish tasks. My experience working in every corner of the MUD service district. My ability to connect with the public to solve problems.
- Gwen Howard** 1. A record of cutting taxes. One of my legislative accomplishments was removing the sales tax on home repairs. 2. Proven commitment to open, accessible government. I want to establish a ratepayer advisory committee to encourage public input in our public utility. 3. A record of asking tough questions. I sounded the early warnings about the false promises in the privatization of child welfare and that move proved a colossal expense for taxpayers.
- Kelly Koepsell** Many years of leadership and process analysis are my main qualifications for this office. I have worked in many countries and with many people encouraging progress and engendering positive relationships. Recognizing what is best for customers and acting on it, in spite of opposition, is what I aim to do if selected to serve.
- Don Kroupa** Lifetime Omaha resident. 40 years of owning a business in Omaha. 18 years elected official on the MUD board.
- Mike McGowan** -Retired after 36 years working in the natural gas utility industry. I have the knowledge, experience and commitment. -Served on the MUD Board for 3 years - including one year as the Board Chair. -I have a Masters Degree in business and executive experience working in the Utility Industry.

Sustainable Development - In some venues, the term "sustainable development" is tied to the UN Agenda 21 thinking. Others consider conservation of natural resources to be tantamount. Where would you place yourself on environmental issues and why?

- Chris Ansell** Neutral, although I think we are experiencing a combination of global warming due to population and natural weather pattern changes.
- Tim Cavanaugh** Certainly, a clean and sustainable water supply is critical for human survival. We as Americans enjoy a comfortable lifestyle. My job as a Board member is to continue to ensure we maintain that comfortable lifestyle that includes clean, affordable drinking water and affordable reliable natural gas to heat our homes.
- Gwen Howard** I do not intend to use UN Agenda 21 in my service on the MUD Board.
- Kelly Koepsell** The Earth is an open system with respect to energy, but a closed system with respect to matter. The matter we manipulate for good purposes creates a systematic imbalance in the natural order of the Earth. This manipulation cannot be taken lightly: it must be done with an eye toward rebalancing the effects that we create.
- Don Kroupa** I would have to look at each environmental issue as it comes up and do what is best for the MUD customer.
- Mike McGowan** MUD must be an active and reliable partner in protecting our environment and our valuable resources.

Utility issue - What do you see as the most important issue for the utility at this time?

- Chris Ansell** Employee raises, contracting costs, large costs associated with infrastructure replacement example there is a 15 year project starting this year to replace the gas lines throughout the metro. While the water infrastructure project is ongoing and costly. Debt cost this year alone is 16.9 Million.
- Tim Cavanaugh** Our ability to meet and exceed increasing stringent EPA guidelines for drinking water and being able to afford those upgrades.
- Gwen Howard** Working with city and state officials to ensure the greatest efficiencies possible in the expensive, unfunded Federal mandate for the CSO sewer project.
- Kelly Koepsell** The most important issue for MUD at this time is its viability as a public entity. Placing control of MUD into the hands of a corporation's board is not the correct future for this great public service.
- Don Kroupa** Keeping gas and water supplies available and continue to strive to keep the lowest gas and water rates in the Midwest. We need to continue to work with the City and Federal governments on the Sewer Separation Project for gas and water.
- Mike McGowan** Maintaining safe and reliable water and natural gas service at the lowest cost possible.

Committees - On what committees would you like to serve and why?

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	North Omaha Commercial Club board member because I care about my area and want to improve for everyone!
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	I like to serve on the Safety and Security Committee, as well as the Marketing Committee. The security of our water and gas delivery systems has always been a priority of mine. Following September 11, 2001, I led the effort to bring the security of our District assets into the 21st century.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	Having served in the Legislature, I believe I bring unique skills and experience to the board, and that will help determine my committee selection.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	I desire service on the Construction and Operation Committee or the Security and Safety Committee. I believe my education and experience are best suited to service on these committees.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	The Insurance Committee. I was chairman of the insurance committee when I was on the board and would like to do that again.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	Budget Committee - utilize my strong financial background. -Personnel Committee - As a VP of Human Resources for 4 years, I have the experience to lead MUD into the future with an educated, motivated and reliable workforce.

Checks and Balances - How do you view the check and balance relationships between the president and the board? How do you picture representing the interests of the public if they differ from the president?

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	I have been and plan to continue looking through the financials finding ways to save the rate payers money while maintaining quality and service. I will vote for what is best for the utility and the rate payer not necessarily what management recommends as they are known to make mistakes over the years costing rate payers more money and unnecessary rate increases.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	My job is to represent the ratepayer-owners of MUD. If I differ than the opinion of the president on an issue, I will work for resolution by working one on one with the president or forging a majority of the Board to address the issue.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	I believe these interests should not differ at a public utility. I look forward to establishing a positive, professional relationship that best advocates on behalf of district ratepayers.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	I believe the separation of powers and duties of the MUD board and its president are effective appropriate at this time. I see the duties of the board, to set the policies to be carried out by the president, as representative of MUD customers.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	I feel we have checks and balances available at this time if we need them. My best interest would be always for the customer.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	[not answered]

Environmental Responsibility - How should the utility balance the increasing needs with environmental responsibility?

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	By staying on the current path of keeping up with regulations and maintaining lines as needed.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	See Number 4 above. [Certainly, a clean and sustainable water supply is critical for human survival. We as Americans enjoy a comfortable lifestyle. My job as a Board member is to continue to ensure we maintain that comfortable lifestyle that includes clean, affordable drinking water and affordable reliable natural gas to heat our homes.]
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	The utility is already on the path to offering CNG as an alternative fuel. I think we need to remain nimble to meet evolving consumer demand and that will in return present options that enhance environmental responsibility.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	Environmental responsibility is required from any and every public entity. MUD can continue its efforts to modernize, thus increasing its sustainability efforts. For the safety and pocketbooks of customers, it is imperative that MUD only delve into alternate energy sources when it is economically feasible for our customers.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	We should always look at how the utilities work with environmental issues.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	Stay active and involved with local, regional and national organizations. Be a leader and protect the environment and our valuable natural resources.

Utility Business Connections - Do you, a family member, or your employer have any business relationships serving the Utility? Please describe.

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	No
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	No.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	No.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	To my knowledge at this time, no one I do business with nor any of my family members have any business dealing with MUD.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	I have a brother-in-law that has worked for MUD for many years.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	No

Security - *What security measures should be maintained or increased?*

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	Security measures are efficient and effective just as they are in place now.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	Cyber security is an increasingly critical issue and the District has taken the steps to strengthen the security of our information systems.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	Without serving on the board currently, I would need more information to answer this question.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	Continuous attention to existing policies is required to ensure security of MUD assets. MUD's security operations and planning is effective, but must continue to be evaluated both on the threat side and on the resource side.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	I would make sure our safety director reviews all security measures and keeps the board informed of these measures.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	Continue the excellent work to protect MUD's natural gas and delivery facilities.

Governing documents - *What do you see as the major governing documents for this position?*

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	There are governing Bi-laws for the MUD Board in place that were set years ago. I'm in the process of researching them in detail.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	The US Constitution, the Nebraska Constitution, EPA standards, legislative statutes, Board by-laws.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	In addition to the Constitution, we follow the applicable state laws that establish local government units in Nebraska.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	The Board of Governors Bylaws and Committee Guidelines are critical to the proper functioning of the MUD. Good order and appropriate interaction in governing the utility is required to ensure safe and efficient service to MUD customers.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	[not answered]
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	The rules and laws emanating from the Nebraska Legislature and applicable federal water and natural gas regulations.

Personal Story - *Please briefly describe a situation where you had to stand alone for what you thought was right when the momentum was pushing the other way. What was the result?*

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	[not answered]
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	I opposed the direct hiring of a Board member to a senior staff position within MUD. The vote was 6-1, with me being the lone dissenter. I felt it did not send the appropriate message to the ratepayers. This position was offered close to the time when the new president was appointed. I knew there was nothing sinister about the job offer, however, it did not look right.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	When I suggested removing the sales tax on home repairs, most everyone thought it would be impossible to accomplish, as government protects its sources of revenue. It was not an easy task, took more than one session, but I was persistent. The result was repeal of the sales tax on home repairs.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	I recall a situation where a guidance document changed and a peer was not reporting activity in accordance with the new guidance. Part of his task was to report activity of one sort on all employees. I sent to him my activity, which I reported in accordance with the new guidance. He was forced to deliver his report with my data in it, and to explain to the boss why my data was so different. He ended up changing his report to fit the new guidance.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	[not answered]
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	Endorsing the outsourcing of natural gas projects to local contractors. This effort is saving the ratepayers millions of dollars and allowing more infrastructure upgrades to proceed. By supporting this initiative, I lost the support of the local MUD Union which then took aggressive action to block my re-election.

Constitution - *Regardless of the position sought, 'upholding the Constitution' is part of the oath of office. What does taking that oath mean to you?*

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	To up hold the constitution and serve the rate payers to the best of my ability
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	My oath is my word. I am a strong believer in the US Constitution and we, as a Board, must operate within its boundaries.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	It has always been a serious obligation from my perspective.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	I have already taken and fulfilled the oath to support and defend the Constitution. I have done that for many years, and consider it a privilege to be allowed to continue to serve.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	I hold the highest regard to upholding the constitution.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	Very simple: obey all of the laws and regulations and always seek to do what is right for the ratepayers.

Family - *What role has your family played in your seeking this office? In holding this position, how do you foresee it affecting your family?*

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	My Family is very supportive and understanding. They are proud of me and would support me in whatever I do.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	As I stated earlier, I have a history of family relationships working for/with the District. I have a grown son and the time obligations will not affect anyone else in a negative way.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	My family has always been supportive. Our family values service to the public. In fact, I am proud of my daughter Sara, who now serves as a Nebraska State Senator.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	My family believes in me and supports me. They are my inspiration and the reason I seek to represent the voters.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	My family has always backed me during my 18 years of service on the MUD board and I don't foresee any changes.
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	My family is very supportive and proud of my work on the MUD Board.

(Regardless of what office is being sought, we ask the following questions so voters can better predict how you will handle tough issues.)

[This statement preceded the following questions on the candidate's questionnaire.]

Personal/Political - *To what degree should an office holder's personal principles be reflected in political decision making? To whom/what will you go for counsel in decision making?*

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	The rate payers, what management recommends, along with my own research and always do what is best financial for the utility in the long run. While maintaining safety and quality.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	The office holder's personal principles act to guide him/her as they make decisions and help to conduct themselves in an ethical way. I speak with other leaders in my life for counsel regarding difficult issues related to the District.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	Personal principles are an important element in the decision making of myself and many others with whom I've served in public office.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	I choose to leave questions 15 through 19 blank.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	[not answered]
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	I truly believe an office holder must always act consistently with his principles and ethics. I have had a long and successful career without any embarrassments or violations of the law. The key to this success is to follow principles, trust your instincts and ALWAYS do what is right. I would seek advice and counsel from my wife, colleagues and my extensive trusted business contacts.

Abortion/capital punishment/etc. - *What definition do you give for each of these terms: pro-life, pro-choice? How do you define yourself and how did you arrive at that view? How does your position relate to the death penalty, embryonic stem cell research, and physician-assisted suicide?*

<b>Chris Ansell</b>	This question does not pertain to the public position I'm running for a non-partisan position so I abstain for the question.
<b>Tim Cavanaugh</b>	I am pro-life. I feel it sends the wrong message to our youth that life can be de-valued to the point that it could be viewed as an inconvenience. I am strongly for the death penalty. Contrary to opponents, it is the ultimate deterrent to pre-meditated murder. Who is acting to protect prison guards and/or inmates if the most severe sanction is "life without parole?" I do not know enough about stem cell research to make a solid stand. I understand, however, that umbilical cord stem cell research can be more valuable than embryonic stem cell research. I oppose physician-assisted suicide.
<b>Gwen Howard</b>	I believe these issues reflect the difficult decisions that face candidates seeking offices unlike the MUD Board.
<b>Kelly Koepsell</b>	I choose to leave questions 15 through 19 blank.
<b>Don Kroupa</b>	[not answered]
<b>Mike McGowan</b>	I am definitely 100% pro-life - I believe that at the very moment of either natural or artificial fertilization, a living and unique human being is created.

Homosexuality - Some consider same-sex relationships should carry the same rights and privileges as traditional marriage. Some view homosexuality as an issue of potential discrimination on the level with race or ethnicity. Some consider it a matter of personal privacy. Some say marriage, for numerous reasons, should remain defined by government as between one man and one woman. Some say children should be raised by a mother and a father and that they are being forgotten in today's discussions on the subject. With which group's philosophy do you most closely agree, and why?

**Chris Ansell** This question does not pertain to the public position I'm running for a non-partisan position so I abstain for the question.

**Tim Cavanaugh** Marriage is between a man and a woman. Some form of civil union would be more palatable than the term marriage. Marriage is rooted in religion and is not an evolving term. I am sensitive to the fairness issue for same-sex couples, and because of that, some form of civil union may be achieved, so that employment and retirement benefits can be fairly distributed.

**Gwen Howard** As someone who specialized in childhood adoption, I advocate for loving family environments. Some politicians who claim to be family advocates have done precious little to ensure all children in Nebraska are provided a safe and nourishing start to life.

**Kelly Koepsell** I choose to leave questions 15 through 19 blank.

**Don Kroupa** [not answered]

**Mike McGowan** I believe a marriage is defined as one man and one woman. But, I also believe couples of any sex should be allowed to enter civil unions and be given and allowed all of the benefits of a marriage.

Past President - What key considerations did you use in deciding how you voted for President in 2012?

**Chris Ansell** This question does not pertain to the public position I'm running for a non-partisan position so I abstain for the question.

**Tim Cavanaugh** I wanted the person whose core beliefs are similar to mine to be president.

**Gwen Howard** Which candidate would best lead the country.

**Kelly Koepsell** I choose to leave questions 15 through 19 blank.

**Don Kroupa** [not answered]

**Mike McGowan** The economy, foreign policy, and getting HealthCare straightened out and clarified for public understanding and participation.

Anything else? - Declare anything else you want voters to know about you.

**Chris Ansell** [nothing further noted]

**Tim Cavanaugh** [nothing further noted]

**Gwen Howard** I have a great respect for all taxpayers and would seek to provide a voice for ratepayers on the MUD Board.

**Kelly Koepsell** I choose to leave questions 15 through 19 blank.

**Don Kroupa** I feel with my 18 years of service on the MUD board my experience would help me strive to keep the lowest gas and water rates in the Midwest and would be very helpful to work with the City and Federal governments on the Sewer Separation Project for gas and water.

**Mike McGowan** I am a hard working, very honest, educated man who would like to put his talents to work and to serve the ratepayers of Omaha.