



A **non-partisan** resource to give Nebraska voters the **information they need** to make an informed decision when voting. A non-edited opportunity for candidates to state their position **in their own words**, online for **free**.

LINCOLN MAYOR

Chris Beutler

Party: Democrat

Website:

<http://mayorbeutler.com/>

See also www.votersnap.com

Rene Solc

Party: NonPartisan

Website: none

Andy Stebbing

Party: Republican

Website:

<http://andystebbingformayor.com/>

See also www.votersnap.com

Note: Order of responses is generally alphabetical, but is changed sometimes for better use of space.

Questions Key:

Contact Information

Biographical

Motivation/Qualifications

Roads

Development Taxes

Property taxes

Gambling-city

Police

Accountability

Ordinances

Electric power

Sustainable Development

Eminent Domain

Abortion-City

Personal story

Decision making

Anything else

(Contact Information) - Details of when we inputted the candidate's responses, including attempts to establish contact and other communication.

Chris Beutler

3-18-15: Talked to campaign manager, Emailed her the questionnaire. Asked her to have it back by the 20th, 23rd latest. 3-20-15: Sent a reminder email. 3-24-15: Sent a reminder email. 3-24-15, 11:50am, spoke with campaign manager – still working on it. 4/1/15, 4:51pm, left phone message reporting other opponent had answered.

Rene Solc

3-17-15: No answer, no machine picked up. 3-18-15: 12:30pm, Left message. 3-18-15: 8:00 pm, Left Message. 3-19-15: Work number went to a fax. 3-20-15: Questionnaire and caller's phone number. 3-20-15: Candidate called me back. emailed questionnaire. 3-23-15: Candidate hand-delivered hand-written questionnaire to caller's house. 3-24-15, Answers copied from caller's typing of candidate's hand-written responses.-

Andy Stebbing

3-18-15: Talked to campaign manager and emailed questionnaire. Asked him to have it back by the 20th, 23rd latest, 3-20-15: Sent a reminder email. 3-24-15, 11:45pm, spoke with campaign manager by phone – aiming for Thursday, maybe. 3-24-15: Sent a reminder email, 3-27-15, Facebooked campaign manager, he said it should be done by Monday. Answers copied from email response received April 1, 2015 08:24am. Note: Candidate could have had opportunity to view opponent's responses before answering.

(Biographical) - Please include biographical information , e.g. family members, church affiliation, employment, etc. you consider important for voters to know and/or reference your website.

Chris Beutler	
Rene Solc	Born in the Czech Republic on Dec 6, 1953. My wife is Karen Solc & she has been working for the VA for 37 years. I have one daughter named Monica Solc who is 31. I belong to Blessed Sacrament [Church]. I have my own company named R & C Construction. I was in the army for 35 years and was deployed to Afghanistan in 2011 and did one year. I have lived in Lincoln since 1973 and care about what happens to our city and the well being of its residents.
Andy Stebbing	Andy Stebbing; Two sons: Chase (15) and Jesse (9); attends Christ Place Church in Lincoln; Retired Sergeant with Lancaster County Sheriff's Department and currently serves as the Lancaster County Treasurer. Website: www.AndyStebbing.com ; Facebook: www.facebook.com/AndyStebbingforMayor ; Twitter: @Stebbing4Mayor

(Motivation/Qualifications) - What has motivated you to seek this office? What do you hope to accomplish? What three qualifications do you bring to this office?

Chris Beutler	
Rene Solc	I care about what happens to our city and its citizens. I see the way city contracts are handled and issues from maintaining the roads. we spend millions of tax payer money to build the issue of recycling here in the city. We need to have common sense answers to these problems. I am a business owner for over 30 years in the city and see firsthand what problems affect both my employees who work 9 to 5 as well as their employers who need to keep their businesses running. I work with the public every day and know their feelings and I am not a politician so I am not corrupt and can make decisions based on what is best for the city rather than what promises I made to donors and constituents.
Andy Stebbing	<p>I am running because I believe Lincoln can be a better place to live, work and raise a family. We can provide more efficient and effective services for our citizens.</p> <p>I would like to improve our public safety and infrastructure. Right now Lincoln residents pay some of the highest taxes in the state. Our wheel taxes are up 37% over the last four years yet city studies indicate our roads get progressively worse each year. Violent crime is up over the last eight years yet the current administration fails to provide even enough police manpower to keep up with the growth of the city. Simply put, Lincoln residents pay the highest taxes in the state but are not getting anywhere close to the level of service they should expect.</p> <p>The three most important qualifications I bring to the office are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A fresh perspective and energy to find new solutions to our problems. My opponent has been in elected office for over 32 years and it is clear he lacks the vision needed to look outside of the box for new solutions. Nearly every challenge the city has faced has been met with a tax or fee increase. This hurts our families and businesses.2. A proven track record. As Lancaster County Treasurer I have made numerous changes and reforms that have improved services while saving the taxpayers over \$1 million in my first four years. We were able to reduce the size of our staff and at the same time add locations and expand office hours to make services more convenient for our taxpayers. We have also made all materials, budgets and account available online to provide greater transparency for the citizens. (continued next page)

(Motivation/Qualifications) - What has motivated you to seek this office? What do you hope to accomplish? What three qualifications do you bring to this office? (continued from previous page)

Andy Stebbing 3. My service as a law enforcement officer for over 24 years, the last twenty with the Lancaster County Sheriff's Office, have provided me much needed experience dealing with the public and other entities at times of extreme need. It has helped equipped me to be able to find solutions to problems in extreme conditions. It has given me a knowledge of public safety functions and needs that will help me address the needs of Lincoln residents.

(Roads) – Discuss your view on the Bypass potential. If you favor it, say why and what you would recommend for paying for it. If you are against it, what would you recommend for traffic control??

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc If we want to continue to grow the city bypasses are inevitable. We should be proactive and preplan based on city growth.

Andy Stebbing I support building the South Expressway and as mayor I would start immediately planning for an Eastern Expressway. The South Beltway already has some funding set aside and is progressing toward what will hopefully be a 2018 start. An Eastern Beltway would be a very important component toward addressing Lincoln's transportation needs. It would help spur development and growth on the city's east side and help us grow the tax base.

(Development Taxes) – What ideas do you have for pursuing development without increasing taxes? On balance, do you perceive tax increment financing net positive or net negative for Lincoln? Describe.

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc To say that you can pursue development without some tax increase is a lie. The trick is to make sure that if you increase it is absolutely necessary, and is used for what is vital to the city.

Andy Stebbing As a rule, raising taxes is always a last resort and only then if all other possible options have failed. Lincoln residents currently pay some of the highest taxes in the state. This serves as a deterrent when recruiting new development and business to our city. I would work to reduce the tax burden on our citizens and businesses to make Lincoln more attractive to those looking to invest in a community.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) can be a very useful tool for revitalization and development. However overusing TIF does not help the overall needs for the better good of the city. Recently I believe Lincoln has been overusing TIF authority by extending projects to pay for items one may deem excessive, artwork as one example. We must remember that the use of TIF takes money away from other entities – like schools – that rely on property tax revenue. I would work to make sure we do not abuse the use of TIF.

(Property taxes) - The overwhelming sentiment during the governor's race was that property taxes in Nebraska are too high. Yet there is little to nothing a governor or the state can do about high property taxes. Do you think the office you are running for could manage a property tax cut? If so, what items?

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc The only way a property tax cut makes sense is if it doesn't affect schools, or the salaries of the police officers, and fire fighters that keep us safe.

Andy Stebbing Lincoln pays some of the highest taxes in the state including the recent addition of a property tax increase. As mayor I will work to make government more efficient and prioritize the basic needs of the city over the desired extras. The end result is to reduce the tax burden our families and businesses have had to deal with over the past eight years.

(Gambling-city) – Discuss the pros and cons of government having more revenue from gambling.

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc Any gambling incentive would come outside of the city limits. I do not think Lincoln would benefit from legalizing gambling within the city limits.

Andy Stebbing I oppose expanded gambling.

(Police) – Is the police force adequate? If not, what would you recommend to ensure that there is complete police protection?

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc The police should increase based on the increase of population.

Andy Stebbing Lincoln's police force is substantially understaffed by national averages. Police response times are up and violent crimes have increased since Mayor Beutler took office. I have set a reasonable goal to hire 5 – 10 new police officers over my first two years. This can easily be achieved by simply reorganizing management. As an example, I would eliminate the Public Safety Director's position. If you have a strong mayor, police chief and fire chief there is no need for an extra layer of bureaucracy. That salary of more than \$160,000 plus benefits would cover the cost of three police officers. There are other positions that can be eliminated or combined to fund additional officer. Lincoln is top heavy with management. We will reorganize to put more police, fireman and city workers addressing the everyday needs of our citizens.

(Accountability) – What would you recommend for measures of accountability and transparency in city government? Please be specific and list examples.

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc I think that there are transparency issues with the city contracts and delegation of the tax incentive finance programs. It seems that politicians manage to come up with millions of dollars just before elections from budgets that were set years previous. That is why I support city audit every two years so we can proactively manage funding.

Andy Stebbing City government must be more transparent and accountable. I have made this one of my top priorities in the Treasurer's Office and I will with city government too.

One of the top priorities will be to update the city website. Citizens and potential recruits should be able to go to the website and find access to nearly every bit of information they need to be informed. The website should be updated on a regular basis and easy to navigate.

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(Accountability) – What would you recommend for measures of accountability and transparency in city government? Please be specific and list examples. (continued from previous page)

Andy Stebbing Top on the list is making sure that citizens know where every penny comes from and where it is either spent or allocated to be spent. We will revise the way our budget is presented to make it easier to find any item. Items will, be clearly labeled by the accurate title and through the actual department the resources are managed by.

One example in the current budget would be the salary for the Mayor’s Chief of Staff. If you were to look at the budget and try to find the actual annual salary for the “Chief of Staff” you will not find it. The current organizational chart for the mayor’s office does not match titles found in the budget. The same is true in other areas of the budget. Information should be easy for the average citizen to find.

(Ordinances) – What city ordinances would you like to change? What should the city do about the sexual orientation ordinance the people overturned with a referendum in 2012?

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc Denying any of our citizen’s basic human rights is something I cannot support.

Andy Stebbing The City Charter requires a vote on issues overturned by referendum, yet it has been sitting on the mayor’s desk for three years. I would put this to a vote at the earliest opportunity and allow the citizens to decide as the Charter requires.

(Electric power) – Other communities in the state have an elected board for the power utilities. Do you oppose or support Lincoln continuing with a mayor-appointed board? Why?

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc I think it needs to be reviewed to see if the current system is fair and sufficient.

Andy Stebbing I would favor looking into changing to an elected board. I would first need to research what this would take by law and what the process would be to assure this is best for Lincoln. For example, it didn’t seem that the rate-payers had any say in the recent addition of street lights placed in the LES rate payer’s bill instead of staying in the city budget creating yet another tax increase on Lincoln power users.

(Sustainable Development) – Officially Lincoln has dropped its association with ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives.) Do you agree or disagree with that decision? Should initiatives begun under that former authority be maintained or discontinued?

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc It is never in a city’s best interest to decide environmental issues are not important. One of the things that makes Lincoln so beautiful are the multiple parks and bike paths, and the many beautiful trees we have that are here due to the Arbor Day Foundation and their initiative started years ago. This is something we shouldn’t forget.

Andy Stebbing I support local control and completely agree with the decision to drop ICLEI. Lincoln should have never signed on to let an international organization dictate how we do our business.

(Eminent Domain) - Describe your thinking on eminent domain and private property rights

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc Eminent Domain should only be used if it is in the best interest and safety of the citizens. It should not be in the best interest of corporations.

Andy Stebbing Eminent Domain should only be used when necessary for the public good.

(Abortion-city) - Even though many voters would like to know your personal position on the abortion issue, for this race, would you support the city funding Planned Parenthood?

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc Yes, any girl or woman is provided free birth control and condoms which stops abortions. No one is in support of aborting a baby.

Andy Stebbing I absolutely oppose any public funding for Planned Parenthood.

(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?

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc A few years ago I received a call from the paper to report that I had returned a wallet with \$900.00 in it back to an immigrant from Ghana. For some reason this was amazing to a lot of people but I felt that it was an easy decision.

Andy Stebbing I have numerous examples that I could use. I am going to use an example from an early age that many of us can relate to. In high school a number of my fellow class mates wanted to, as a group, skip classes for a day. I did not believe this was the right thing to do. As a result of me standing up to do the right thing, a majority of my classmates did not go through with their plans. I was later elected to be class president.

(Decision making) - To whom/what will you go for counsel in decision-making?

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc I think that it depends on the decision that needs to be made. There are people in my life that I will lean on if I am unsure but only if the situation is applicable. If elected mayor it would be no different.

Andy Stebbing I will seek input and advice from my staff, experts in the subject at hand and finally I will seek input from the citizens. I plan to hold town hall meetings throughout the community in order to be more connected with the citizens and their needs.

(Anything Else) Declare anything else you want voters to know about you.

Chris Beutler

Rene Solc I have the luck of never being in politics so I have never been corrupted. I am honest and will follow my convictions. I have no financial support so I don't owe any favors to anyone.

Andy Stebbing I am a tested and proven public servant who will bring fiscal responsibility to the Mayor's Office. We will improve our infrastructure and public safety by making these the top priority of the city. We will make city government approachable and transparent. I understand that we work for the citizens not the other way around. I am asking for Lincoln voters to give me a chance to make our city an even better place to live, work and raise a family.