

BELLEVUE CITY COUNCIL – Ward 1 – Special Election

Steven A. Carmichael
Party: Republican
Website:

Dave Compton
Party: Republican
Website:

Steve Dawes
Party: Democrat
Website:

Michael Knebel
Party: Libertarian
Website:
facebook.com/electmichaelknebel

Note: Candidates are offered the opportunity to answer only the starred (*) questions.

Contact Information - ranging from the details of when we inputted the candidate's responses, to attempts to establish contact, to if we still need a volunteer caller, to if the candidate is unopposed and therefore not on the list to contact.

Steven A. Carmichael 7-30-13, 11:28pm, questionnaire emailed with answers to similar questions provided in 2012 Primary. 7-31-13, 8:07am, candidate emailed, said would do the questionnaire. 8-11-13, 4:07pm, sent reminder email with offer to post next day if answers in by midnight.

David Compton 8-2-13, left message on business phone giving email address. 8-5-13, 7:38pm, candidate replied to email. 8-5-13, 11:24pm, questionnaire emailed. 8-8-13, 7:39pm, candidate emailed to say would work on the questionnaire on the weekend. 8-11-13, 4:06pm, sent reminder email with offer to post next day if answers in by midnight.

Steve Dawes 7-30-13, 11:31pm, questionnaire emailed with answers to similar questions provided in 2012 Primary. 8-11-13, 4:01pm, sent reminder email with offer to post next day if answers in by midnight.

Michael Knebel 8-3-13, 7:45pm, questionnaire emailed with answers to similar questions provided in 2012 Primary. 8-4-13, 3:01pm, ANSWERS RECEIVED.

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

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel I was born and raised in Lincoln Nebraska, and went to Catholic school up until college when I enrolled in UNL. I now live in Bellevue with my wife and daughter. We are expecting our second child to be born any day now. My wife went to school in Bellevue and is a nurse with Hillcrest. I recently received a promotion with TD Ameritrade working in our Active Trader area. I firmly believe in remaining active and engaged, and have done numerous outreach programs through my work and church. More information on my campaign can be found on my Facebook page: facebook.com/electmichaelknebel

***What has motivated you to seek this office? Is there a key issue you hope to address?**

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel My motivation comes from the idea there is a time in every person's life where they must stop talking about what should be done, and take action to see that the goal is completed. My wife, my daughter, my faith, and my determination to shrink government to a level where it is accountable to the citizens are what drive me in this campaign. The key issues I hope to address are simplifying the city code enforcement, keeping the city within budget, and bringing new and fresh ideas to the Council. I firmly believe we need representation for the younger families in the Olde Towne area, and that is what I will bring if elected. I also will work to lower the city sales tax, so that we may be more competitive with the

neighboring cities. Every year we lose tax revenue to Iowa because of their tax holidays.

What three primary qualifications do you bring to this office?

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel Youth, determination, and ethics. When I speak of youth, I speak of the possibility that resides in someone who has not worked in the city government for two decades. I have new ideas and a fresh outlook on government. I'm a pragmatic Libertarian in that I understand government has a role in our lives, but it must be a limited one. My determination can best be shown in what I was able to do for Joplin relief in 2011. Within a week of the tornado I managed to hold fundraisers and get enough volunteers so that I could drive down two trucks and a trailer full of supplies to help with the clean up. Finally, I will bring an ethical approach back to local government. As a city councilman, I will be Bellevue's employee, not its manager. I have a strong desire to follow both my faith and the Constitution, while realizing that the government should not seek to legislate matters of personal belief and lifestyle.

***Discuss how the sustainable development presented in the UN Agenda 21 comprehensive plan can be a benefit or detriment to the citizens. What do you believe should be the government's role in establishing green policy?**

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel UN Agenda 21 is a detriment to the citizens, because it seeks to find a one size fits all solution to a problem that is much more complex than people seem to understand. Government should step aside and let the citizens and private industry develop a sustainable green policy. The solutions should always come from the people. The ingenuity comes from persistence and hard work and freedom of thought, not from government regulation.

***What specific plan do you have for making the best use of taxpayer dollars? For example, what priority would you put on zoning, business incentives, updating technology, personnel management, etc.**

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel I would vote to do away with the personal spending accounts for the Council. A council member gets a salary and a spending account, which is a misuse of tax payer funds. Also, I would look at trimming some city services by seeking to privatize. At a local level this makes more sense as we can get locally owned businesses to do some of the jobs of the city. As far as business incentives, we should look at possibly offering a lower tax rate to open a business in Olde Towne. We need to make the area more attractive and competitive so that we can grow and prosper. Technology always needs to be updated, and any investment in technology is one that can save the city more money down the road. The sooner you upgrade for the future, the better.

What do you recommend for supporting businesses in Olde Towne now that the city offices are moving?

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel The sky is the limit on this one. My main recommendation is talking with the residents to find what they want Olde Towne to look like. And then, I would talk with developers and business owners in areas like Dundee and even reach out to areas like Bowling Green and others that have redeveloped a downtown and river front area. Olde Towne needs to be a place that will attract residents to spend their time and money. We can do this by expanding the options for businesses and entertainment.

How can the city council help in job creation? What would you do to make the city more business friendly? What specific ideas do you have for jobs?

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel The City Council can best help in job creation and making the city more business friendly by taking a step back. We don't need to over regulate our local businesses. We need to give them room to breathe, to grow, and to thrive. We can create an environment that rewards ingenuity, but does not seek to play favorites with subsidies to particular businesses or industries. We can simply lower the tax rate across the board to attract more business.

What existing city ordinances would you like to change?

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel I would like to eliminate a lot of the ordinances, not simply change them. There are too many rules in Bellevue. And too many tax dollars used to enforce those rules. I would seek to end random code enforcement sweeps through our neighborhoods. The only time you would have a Code Enforcement Officer coming to your door is if there was a specific call or if your house was undergoing major renovation. I would seek to eliminate many of the permits that we have to file for, both personal and business. I would go line by line through our city code and work to simplify all of it in the next three years. The city of Bellevue deserves a lot more personal freedom with their property, and they deserve respect.

*What should be done to provide library service to the growing southwest areas of Bellevue, for example: additional library, e-resources, Sarpy cities library coop, etc., without damaging the services provided in the current location?

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel The city should always have library services available. This is something that doesn't cost a lot, and it provides a benefit to all citizens. We should look at e-resources and keep all options open in order to make sure something as basic as a library is able to be sustainable.

***Discuss the pros and cons of government having more revenue from gambling.**

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel I would like it if more people in politics would realize that Nebraska's current stance is completely hypocritical. Why can we have Keno, dog racing, and Powerball and yet not allow other forms of gambling? Bellevue is only a quick car ride away from the casinos in Iowa. If someone here has a gambling problem, they have plenty of access to the source. Not allowing casinos in our state is not going to stop this issue. When done in moderation, gambling may not be harmful. But despite the harm that it inflicts on some, is it the government's responsibility to help these individuals, or does that help reside in some other form? Legislatively, I think the pros of gambling revenue outweigh the cons. Personally, I don't need to gamble, but that doesn't mean others in this state shouldn't have access to it.

***Describe your thinking on eminent domain and private property rights.**

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel Private property rights are key and at any time you allow the government to use eminent domain you open the door for them to do it on a larger scale. I do not favor eminent domain in any form. We have rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. And part of that liberty comes from working hard and being able to have property that you can call your own. We must protect private property rights.

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?

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel I've registered Libertarian, so every day presents situations like this. But in all honesty, I've never truly been alone in a situation like this. There is always someone else that shares my beliefs or convictions, and is able to help stand up for what is right. But I live everyday standing up for what I believe in, and for the Constitutional rights of all people. I spoke at a gun rights forum this winter on Creighton campus and spoke up for the rights of the individual. I, being in a room with people across all political spectrums, spoke of the fact that our issue isn't with guns, but it is with how we treat each other and the respect we show for one another. I stated we needed to treat all people, black, white, male, female, gay, straight, born and unborn all with the same respect and value for life. After saying that at the gun forum, I had a lot of Republicans and Democrats both coming up to me and telling me I was spot on.

Do you, a family member, or your employer have any business relationship serving the city? Please describe.

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel No.

What do you see as the major governing documents for this position? Have you read them?

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response
David Compton Awaiting response
Steve Dawes Awaiting response
Michael Knebel The Constitution, and the city's by-laws. Yes I have read them.

What does it mean to "uphold the Constitution" in the position you seek?

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response
David Compton Awaiting response
Steve Dawes Awaiting response
Michael Knebel Upholding the Constitution means you govern as a representative of your constituents by trying to maintain the maximum amount of freedoms for everyone. The type of government that works best is that which governs least. The Constitution is a living document, still very much applicable to our lives. At times, there have been points in history that we have sought to amend the document, but this type of responsibility should not be taken lightly. As a public servant you are called to make sure that all citizens have the same access and opportunities. Upholding the Constitution means equal rights, not equal outcomes or specialized treatment. It means we have the right to our land, to freedom of speech and religion, to own guns, and to be free from illegal searches. It means the government should not get involved in your private lives. The antithesis of the upholding the Constitution is seeking to pass legislation such as SOPA, NDAA, and the Patriot Act. It also means that we should not, as a government, force the people to purchase things like health insurance. The Constitution is in favor of personal responsibility and the free market, and we must be as well.

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

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response
David Compton Awaiting response
Steve Dawes Awaiting response
Michael Knebel My family has been very supportive and understands that we are put here for a short time on this planet, and we must use that time wisely. To respect that I have chosen to use that time to try and serve others.

***Discuss your view on how an office holder's personal life and/or values affects his/her political performance.**

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response
David Compton Awaiting response
Steve Dawes Awaiting response
Michael Knebel A person's faith can have an effect on their decisions. And I think that a person's idea on personal redemption can play a big role in how they govern. Personally I feel that everyone can and does make mistakes, myself included. But we must realize that we can always be given a chance to make things right and live the life we were called to live. We base a lot of our decisions on who we vote for by how that person is viewed as a leader. I take a personal journey of growth each day, and strive to be a better person and leader. You can see in my personal life how I try to value each person I meet, and love nothing more than helping out someone. I do this, not because I am forced to by government regulations, but because it is the right thing to do.

Discuss your view on the recent decision by the Supreme Court concerning the Defense of Marriage Act.

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel Government shouldn't define marriage. And if the government is going to offer benefits for two adults engaging in a contract, then it should be open to all. Our personal beliefs on what marriage is should never be dictated by what government tells us they will recognize.

***What definition do you give for each of these terms: pro-life, pro-choice. Which is your view and what education or experiences drive you to hold that view?**

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel I long for the day when our society no longer tries to lessen any person's life, in or out of the womb. Scientifically speaking, life is formed when an egg is fertilized. What is the debate about? Abortion as an elective procedure should have never come into our mindset. However, in the case of medical emergencies, a doctor should not be legislated on what they can perform. I was pro-choice for many years, but over the time, my faith and personal experience with becoming a father solidified my ideals on abortion. The idea of 'viability' is a ridiculous one as I don't know one person that I would trust with the decision on who is or could possibly ever be 'viable'. We all have some form of viability and use, and should not seek to judge or destroy life based on what we feel is acceptable. Being a Libertarian says we should have freedom of choice when it comes to our life, and I agree 100%. But the limits are when it affects another life, and in abortion, it affects another life. I do not support elective abortion at all.

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

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel I voted my conscience and with the person I felt would best defend the Constitution. I voted Gary Johnson because I felt that of all the candidates, he had the best responses on dealing with the budget, drug war, immigration, and foreign policy.

Declare anything else you want voters to know about you.

Steven A. Carmichael Awaiting response

David Compton Awaiting response

Steve Dawes Awaiting response

Michael Knebel Much like the challenge Rudy had with trying to get on the team with Notre Dame, so too do I have the challenge of getting elected to City Council. I'm not a city employee, and I'm not as well-known as the incumbent was. I wasn't born in Bellevue, but I chose to live here. I choose to stay here and to make this place a great town to raise children. If you had to know one thing about me, it is that I have optimism and trust toward people that I wish to share with the city. I want you, the voter, to know that if you vote for me it will be a vote for a new way of doing things. It will be the start of you having a voice in how government works, especially those who do not perfectly align with either the Democrats or Republicans. I think we all deserve more freedom, and more respect from our government. And we deserve a little more of our hard earned money back in our wallet. I just want to prove to you that one person can make a difference, and with any luck, that one person inspires others to make a difference too.