

I became a resident of Manistee in 1994 when my spouse Jean (Kniat) retired from USAF (Chief Master Sergeant). I enlisted in the USAF at age 17 and am a Major, USAF, retired with over 25 years of military service. A complete history of my military service can be found at [www.jwsmanistee.com](http://www.jwsmanistee.com). I've been a substitute teacher in Georgia, Florida and Michigan, an assistant store manager for Wal-Mart, an owner/agent for an insurance business in Manistee, the Director of Housing for FiveCAP, and a Building Code Inspector for the State of Michigan. I graduated from High School in 1966, have an Associate degree in General Studies, a Bachelor's degree in Occupational Education, a Master's degree in Guidance and Counseling, plus numerous military management and leadership courses. My activities in the community include Kiwanis (former Secretary and President), Elks (Board of Directors Chair, Exalted Ruler 3 years, former Leading and Lecturing Knight), life member of Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 4499, and a past treasurer for Manistee Golf and Country Club. I've been an election inspection/captain poll worker and served a term on the Compensation Commission. I Chair the Oil & Gas Commission, serve a Secretary on the P.E.G. Commission, and serve on the Harbor Commission and DDA. I've attended meetings of every board and commission in the City, Manistee and Filer Townships, County Summits, Intergovernmental, and Tribal Council meetings.

I'm running for City Council to continue the progress that is being made. New business opened. More funds are being dedicated to repair streets. I am accessible and responsive to the citizens of Manistee. I feel an obligation to contribute to the growth and improvement of the community and welcome a chance to serve residents of Manistee as a City Council member. Preserving the historic culture of Manistee – those elements that make us unique, must be balanced with opportunity to attract and retain young people and family sustaining employment opportunities to the community. We have a high number of seniors, low-income households, and seasonal residents that need to be considered in decisions on how their tax dollars are spent and what the priorities of the community are. All aspects of City Government must be examined (by local committees, not paid consultants) to insure we are getting the best value for citizen tax dollars. I've led efforts to provide a sustainable budget. My research and study of the community extends back to 2003. My goal is to continue to serve and advocate for the community.

My goal is to have a comprehensive long-term plan to repair and maintain city streets. We need to establish a list of priorities for the city to focus on – focus on services that can only be provided by the city and partner with County and State agencies to economically leverage those services and eliminate duplication of efforts and spending. Resources will always be limited, and choices will have to be made on what is best for the community at large. Good schools, public safety, and maintenance of public infrastructure will promote growth and opportunity within the community. Public forums, to gather input from residents on issues must be expanded beyond public comment periods at City Council meetings to involve residents in the direction of maintenance and growth. One way communications, without the ability to engage elected officials on issues and debate issues miss the objective of open public discussion. There are many talented citizens who reside in the community who could participate to return Manistee to its vibrant past and we need to take advantage of that talent. I have the experience, drive, and leadership to continue the progress that has been made since 2014. You can depend on me to dedicate time and energy to understand and respond to the challenges we face as a community. I'm not a "silent participant" and will continue to speak out, challenge, and advance our City to future prosperity.

Job growth (family sustain wages) is high on my list of priorities. As a recent Redevelopment Ready Certified Community (RRC) and selection for participation in the Governor's Rising Tide economic development initiative we are we positioned to expand. Controlling cost is another priority, we had our first taxable value growth in 8 years in 2017 and need to build on that. Our City employee retirement fund has gone from 108% funded in 2005 to barely 80% funded today with a near \$4 million unfunded liability that must be addressed. I have experience as a financial advisor (and held securities licenses in the past) and can lead Council members to solutions that fairly address the valuable City staff and taxpayers. The cost of debt service is a burden that must be addressed, tightening our spending and working toward "pay as you go" (Motor Pool Fund) is essential. I have championed elimination of questionable spending and have become well versed on Michigan Municipal Spending rules. My attendance at every Capital Area Conference, Michigan Municipal League Convention, and a recent Michigan Association of Mayor event reflect my desire to be well versed on opportunities to enhance my skills as an elected official and

serve the public. Affordable housing that attracts residents and adds to the tax base is important. Programs that allow aging residents to “age in place” in their homes and provide services they are no longer able to perform are important. As Mayor, I coordinated a “lunch with City Council members” at the Council on Aging to give our seniors an opportunity to meet all of their elected representative (Council members “serve at large” and elected by the entire City voter population. I need your support to continue service to the community!