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LIVE



by: [Tony Nguyen](#)

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UPDATE: Amy Blansit has taken her name out of the running for Springfield City Council's Zone 1 seat, instead deciding to file to run to [represent the 133rd district in Missouri's State House](#) in Jefferson City.

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – City Council will interview the five applicants for the vacant Zone 1 seat.

The interviews will be conducted from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 12th.

[Meet Nixa's District 2 city council candidates](#) >

Ozarksfirst.com got access to The City of Springfield's press release with details on each applicant:

Karen Banta, self-employed

On her application, Banta listed her previous employers and positions as:

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“Parents as First Teacher and screening rep for the Lamar School District and Golden City School Districts, as well as a Head Start family resource specialist for the Lamar School District and manager/owner for a retail store and family farm for 35 years.”

Banta’s special qualifications for the Zone 1 seat are:

“A wide experience base, early childhood training, training in critical conversations and communications, training in conflict resolution and assisting people reach their goals.”

Educational background

“Lockwood, Missouri Southern State University, University of Chambery – France, continuing education – Parents As First Teachers and Head Start family resource specialist, Elijah School of Prayer and Counseling, Language/Mission School – Albertville, France.”

Community activities and offices held

“School room mother, Cub Scout leader, baseball coach, PTA president and member, small group leader, youth group leader, blood drive coordinator, election poll worker, mentor, mission trips in the U.S. and seven countries, GOP Central Committee

On her application, Horton listed her special qualifications to fill the Zone 1 seat as:

“Teaching required coursework necessary for DE&I certification and my work on the Springfield Inclusion Study producing recommendations to address the welcome deficit qualifies me to provide additional support and counsel regarding citywide DE&I efforts. My high degree of civic engagement and awareness in Springfield-Greene County (in multiple domains including poverty) certainly qualifies me to serve Zone 1 residents and make significant contributions to municipal governance and public policymaking necessary to make Springfield an extraordinary place for all to live, work and play. And finally, my analytical/research/evaluation skills can provide insights into City Council deliberations, consensus building and the decision-making process.”

Previous employers and positions

“As a self-employed person for the past 11 years, Lenica Consulting has subcontracted with Center for Music Therapy and Wellness as a geriatric music specialist for four years; and began contracting with Drury University in 2016 as an adjunct instructor for Drury students earning degrees in music therapy and certification in diversity, equity and inclusion. Lenica Consulting has secured business contracts with Pratt Consultants as a data curator; Community Partnership of the Ozarks as a program evaluator and researcher and Missouri State University as a contributing researcher to the Springfield Inclusion Study funded by Community Foundation of the Ozarks.”

Educational background

“Master of public administration, Missouri State University – completed a master’s thesis entitled ‘The Effect of Student Characteristics on Leading Indicators of Academic Success.’ Results and policy recommendations were presented to SPS Superintendent John Jungmann and many policy recommendations were implemented by the school district.”

of group cohesion and positive statements were statistically significant demonstrating stepping as a useful tool to promote prosocial behavior among adolescent females considered to be at risk.

Bachelor of arts in psychology, Tuskegee University – graduated summa cum laude.”

Community activities and offices held

“Since 2018, I’ve served on the Greene County Senior Citizens’ Services Fund Board serving as treasurer of the \$2.9 million tax levy for two of those years. In 2019, I was appointed to the Mayor’s Commission for Children by Mayor McClure and City Council; and also during 2019 I began serving as Ujima Language and Literacy’s founding board president while at the same time beginning a three-year appointment serving on Leadership Springfield’s board of directors.

From 2017-2020, I served on the advisory council and the performance measures and data management workgroup for Prosper Springfield.

But I can go back as far as three months after moving to Springfield in 2013 volunteering as a guest guide at Community Partnership of the Ozarks’ annual Hope Connection being assigned to an unsheltered person to build rapport and help them navigate through service providers. Then just a few months later, I co-produced the Hope Connection’s survey data results report and presented the report to CPO’s Continuum of Care team. And being the analytical creative that I am, I participated as a survey volunteer during CPO’s Point in Time count of homeless persons in our area.”

[A closer look at the five Springfield school board candidates](#) ▶



On her application, Hubbard listed her special qualifications to fill the Zone 1 seat as:

“Thirty-five years’ experience in Springfield. Well-read.”

Previous employers and positions

Mercy Hospital, 31 years as a registered nurse. Five years as co-owner of Red Top Oven, LLC selling jams, relishes, etc. at Farmers Market of the Ozarks.”

Educational background

“Diploma, registered nurse degree and about two years of extra college, no degree.”

Community activities and offices held

“Missouri State Founders Club member.”

Stephen Sexton, retired

On his application, Sexton listed his special qualifications to fill the Zone 1 seat as:

“I am a native of Springfield, having been born and raised here in the ‘50s and ‘60s. When I retired, I bought my parents’ house and now live in the house I grew up in. Although all of my school friends and neighbors have moved elsewhere, I moved into the now very different neighborhood I grew up in. Since I want to leave the house to my grandkids, I want to improve Zone 1 to be a safe and desirable place to live.

In early 2020, I bought a neglected property on Robberson. After going through the demo permitting process. all at my



money where my mouth is. I believe one should lead by example and I also believe that these experiences give me a unique insight into the challenges and possibilities for Zone 1.”

Previous employers and positions

“U.S. Army staff sergeant/SP6 – electronic maintenance. Various locations, including West Berlin; self-employed – sales, design, repair and installation of electronic systems and equipment; custodian – Ozarks Technical Community College, Missouri State University and Drury University; Northrop Grumman – Diego Garcia satellite field engineer for the International Space Station; Raytheon Technologies in Germany and Bulgaria – assistant program manager for mobile electronic shelters; field engineer at Russian missile facility as part of the SALT II Treaty; installed and maintained electronic security systems as a lead field engineer at various airports.”

Educational background

“Mesa Community College – electronic engineering degree and Arizona State University – electronic engineering degree.”

Community activities and offices held

Board member and vice president for Woodland Heights Neighborhood Association. Currently attempting to help revive the Moon City project located within the WHN. Organized the Adopt-A-Street City program in WHN working with Tina Stob in Public Works. Started a WHN tool lending library working with Community Partnership of the Ozarks – built shed and acquired tools. I have been involved with several trash day events through WHN sponsored by WHNA, Habitat for Humanity and the City. Literally tons of trash have been removed during these events. I have participated in other community organizing events in WHN and Zone 1 pocket gardens that I feel will help provide a path forward to provide food for our neighborhood. Highway



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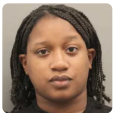
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