

## Kevin Bennett – Why I am considering running for City Council.

### My current concerns:

At the exclusion of addressing current community problems the City Council has focused almost exclusively on new development long into the future for the past two years.

- Base Area Decisions**      City Council allowed for the destruction of large important buildings at the base area but did not require any replacement construction. Council is in the process of granting increased vesting when the City code calls for a max of 3 years.
- Council has subsidized future development with variances and up zoning.
- As a result, their decisions cost the Ski Time Square jobs, tax revenue, and the loss of some of the oldest, most popular businesses on the mountain.
- Growth without water**      The City Council encourages growth without water. It did not require the Steamboat 700 to bring any “wet water” with its annexation petition. Thus, Steamboat 700 puts the burden of infrastructure costs *only* on the Old Town water system, its residents and businesses.
- Lack of Transparency**      This Council is not transparent. It has made no direct attempt to keep the community informed on the progress of Steamboat 700 through regular updates on its web page or newspaper city page. Instead one must attend all the meetings or rely on the local newspaper.
- There have been over 30 private meetings and continuous ex-parte communication between Council members and Steamboat 700 developers.
- Rush to approval**      The Council rushes to approve Steamboat 700. Why is everything moving so fast? Decisions on important issues, such as spot zoning and base area rezoning, have been made in only two meetings.
- Council is in the process of granting Steamboat 700 a 25 year vesting – they do not have to begin until approx 2017.
- Fiscally irresponsible**      Council even attempted to refund millions of dollars in taxes owed by developers, which passes costs on to city residents.
- Old Town water plant investment dollar reserves for future expansion, that should contain millions of dollars with all the new construction, have been drained and contain close to nothing.
- Water reserves have been depleted and Old Town citizens are paying higher rates (50%) but Council failed to increase tap fees for new construction.
- Council has reduced the cities grant writing program.
- Steamboat 700**      Little or no attempt at mitigating the impact of Steamboat 700 to the existing town. For example, the only new road being built in the existing city is paid for by the city, county and developer and goes to the new development. City and County taxpayers will pay for a majority. The new traffic study ignores safety issues and simply funnels all the new traffic to the edge of Old Town, where any City involvement and mitigation stops.
- Old Town residents and businesses will pay the real costs of providing water infrastructure to thousands of new houses.

### My Platform: Back to Basics

Preserve our quality of life and solving current problems, not creating future ones.

Address ever-increasing traffic on Lincoln Avenue.

Continue to expand public parks, trails and open space.

Concentrate on streets, traffic counts, lighting, sidewalks, urban forest and burying of utilities.

Bring back an open public process that respects the citizens as well as developers, and put a stop to all private meetings with developers and ex-parte communication.

Focus on local businesses

### Highlights of Accomplishments on City Council 1993-2001 (President 1995-2001).

**In government, nothing is achieved alone. The following accomplishments were achieved through building multiple partnerships, aggressive grant writing, engaging our citizens and, in retrospect, some pretty terrific City Councils. Northwest Colorado received 58 million dollars in grants during the 1990's.**

Instrumental in creating the Purchase of Development Rights Program.

Wrote the Yampa Valley's first comprehensive plan.

Reduced traffic by improving the transit system, making it free to rider, increasing the number of passengers from 350,000 to over 1 million a year.

Built Howelsen Hill Ice Arena.

Founded and co-chaired the Plastic Ski Jump Project (aka The Colorado Olympian Project).

Built Haymaker Golf Course.

Partnered in the enlargement of the Fish Creek Reservoir, increasing the City's water supply.

Built traffic medians – there has not been any new median work in years.

Started the under grounding of the utility program.

Protected tax dollars while improving the community.

Built Centennial Hall with a cost of .80¢ on the local tax dollar.

Moved Council meetings out of the Police Station, after 20 years, and into Centennial Hall.

Preserved hundreds of acres around the city with conservation easements on private or state government property.

### Developed or increased a majority of the parks in Steamboat Springs, from 235 acres ± to approx 1,000

#### **New parks and open space created by Council (1995-2001) and owned by the City:**

Legacy Ranch (Corner of Hwy 131 and Hwy 40)	Trails not constructed
Howelsen Meadows	Trails constructed
Gossard Park	Trails constructed
Core Trail Extension (Railroad. Between Art Dept and Community Center)	Trails constructed
Multi Model Center (Bus Turn Around) for future downtown employee parking, trail extension, children's park and Pocket Park	Trails constructed
Williams Preserve (90 acres in front of Tree House)	Trails not constructed
Little Red School House	Parking lot constructed
5 mile Core Trail Extension – City Easement - Yampa Valley Land & Cattle Co (aka Humble Ranch)	Trails not constructed
Downtown Pocket Park and Parking lot (7 <sup>th</sup> and Yampa)	Park/Parking lot constructed
River Creek Park	Trails and Parking lot constructed

The average cost to local city taxpayers for new parks and open space was .15¢ per dollar spent, the partners paid the rest.