

All Candidates Response Form

Village of Harrison Hot Springs



Instructions

1. Complete the Candidate Information below, then answer all questions, including the Lightning Round. These questions apply to all candidates, whether running for Mayor or Council.
2. Type your answer in the response box under each question. Responses may be given in any order.
3. Each response must be no more than 500 words. Lightning Round answers are YES or NO.
4. Your file MUST be saved in PDF format and titled with your name, for example: Stephanie_Gallamore.pdf
5. Word documents will NOT be converted to PDF for the website. Files that are not PDFs cannot be posted.
6. When finished, in Word use File > Save As (or Export), choose PDF as the file type, and name the file with your name. Return the completed PDF as directed by the event organizers.

Candidate Information

Candidate name:

Wendy Baldwin

Running for:

☐ Mayor ☒ Council

File name to save as:

Wendy Baldwin 2026

Click in a box and type. Boxes expand as you type.

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

For all candidates

Question 1

When a tourism business wants to expand, do you see that as an opportunity for economic development or a risk to preserving Harrison's character? What criteria would you use to decide?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

I think it is important for us as a Tourist destination to look closely at any Tourism business that would like to expand, especially, if it can be part of the shoulder seasons.

However, I think it is important to ensure any expansion should be inline with the natural setting of the Village keeping with the "Breathe in the Wild" campaign. As well, it is important that it be something that would also enhance the lives of the local residents.

Question 2

What is your approach to transparency and accountability? What information do you think residents are not currently getting from council that they should be receiving?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

There have been many complaints for many years about transparency and accountability within the council and the Village staff.

- 1) Closed council meetings. This seems to be an issue that stands out. I understand there are certain topics of conversation that need to be kept confidential and closed meeting are required. It perhaps would help for the public to have more clarity on the reason for the closed meeting other than it falling under the larger umbrella. For example does it pertain to staff, employment or land etc.
- 2) The Village staff have made a lot of effort to have engagement online and information with Get Into It Harrison, Friday Fun Facts. and more. I feel we need to ensure the people who do not have internet, smart phones, or computers etc also get information via mail so they are included.
- 3) When it comes to such things like important infrastructure, housing, dyking, sewer, water etc. I feel public engagement prior to moving forward is key. The Housing scenario that we just went thru is an example. It made a lot of the public feel excluded and uninformed. I believe that is a lot to do with the discontentment. Public engagement prior to Open Houses where there are a few predetermined options is what I feel people would like.
- 4) Services being hired to do work for the Village. What is the procedure followed? This type of question has been asked a lot and would be great to be known to the public.

Until I fully understand what Council can and cannot do, I can only enquire at this time.

Question 3

How would you work to strengthen the relationship and communication between the Village of Harrison Hot Springs and the District of Kent, including pursuing a cost-sharing agreement for the regional aquatic centre so Harrison residents can access the same rates and registration opportunities as District of Kent residents, while also strengthening partnerships with other community organizations?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

There should always be a healthy relationship established and maintained with our neighbouring communities. We both have community goals and when they can work together it is a win/win situation. We both have different types of communities, one being farmland and nature areas with a population of aprox 6300 and the other being a lake side Tourist Village with a population of 1900.

With our geography and borders, our lands are entangled and we need to work together.

With the Regional Aquatic Centre and a cost-sharing agreement. I think we first need to survey our residents to see how many people would regularly utilize the centre. If we survey and perhaps 20-30% would use it regularly, it would hard to justify the Village residents taking on an 8% increase in property taxes. As well, many of our seniors are on a fixed income and that type of an increase could bring hardship.

We also need to look at what the Village's priorities are. What is most urgent to be worked on that would take priority this type of commitment. Being a small village I don't feel we can afford to take that expense on.

I understand that the District of Kent needs to bring in as much revenue as possible for this wonderful centre and their residents are their priority as ours would be to us. Perhaps once we find out the percentage of who would use it, we could come up with something creative and supply vouchers to help pay for the usage fees? This would be us supporting the Harrison Users and the District of Kent's revenue to help pay for the pool upkeep etc. Just a thought and would love to hear more from our residents.

Question 4

What specific initiatives would you support to attract visitors in the fall, winter, and spring? What are your priorities for improving Harrison's tourism infrastructure?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

I would like to see us collaborate more with surrounding area events such as the Harrison Tulip Festival. Tourism did a great job with the passport and tulips in the participating stores. I would like to see more involvement with the Village. More Tulips in our spring planters. Agassiz does an amazing job also with their tulip plantings. Could we have some street banners to temporarily replace the flag/banners in the Village while it is on.

What about a Kite Festival? We have wind!

Parksville had a children's sand castle competition. We have sand!

What about more children and youth learning painting and other artisan skills and use our Memorial Hall? We have tons of artists and teachers!

What about our youth creating designs for the banner/flags for the different events?

What about bringing back October Fest and Collaborate with the Resort and have fun things for kids and adults like Pumpkin Bowling?

I would also like to look into a Business Improvement Association to help with events and potentially funding.

Question 5

Harrison Hot Springs Elementary is an aging school in a growing community. If elected, do you support the Village actively pursuing the Civic Campus project in partnership with School District 78 to make a new elementary school a reality? What specific actions would you support?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

Because this is a rather complex situation with a few moving parts, I would like to find out a few more details.

- 1) What is the expected enrollment over the next 2-5 years or longer. What is the current capacity?
- 2) Where are they willing to put the school if it was approved?
- 3) What is the current condition of the school? Are there suitable renos that could be made?
- 4) Is the current school suitable for a Civic Campus? What type of renovations would it require for that type of use?
- 5) What is the cost to the Village?
- 6) Who owns the land that the school is currently on?
- 7) Would the Village be willing to remove our treed Firehall Park? (not acceptable to me)
- 8) Is the Village hoping to have new offices for the staff and council? If so, have we looked into the Green Grants to do additions onto the back of the current office which would maintain our quaint village look and feel?

To start, I would most likely want to see renovations to the existing school as it already has the school yard and fields for sports. I would not vote to remove any of the treed areas. More to follow once I know more on the whole proposal.

Question 6

What are your priorities for emergency management?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

I would like to see an emergency exit plan posted much like a Muster Station sign where residents can see it and get familiar with it. Perhaps at the post office bulletin board. I would also like to see something in the accommodations for visitors to refer to as well as a public display for visitors.

Could there be community contact list and have volunteers to be a contact in case of emergencies for direction? Perhaps 1 for each designated area of neighbourhood?

I feel arming the residents with this information and a plan is a high priority.

I would like to see a town meeting with diagrams and information and for public input and possibly committees formed.

Question 7

Harrison is a small, close-knit community. How would you keep personal relationships, business interests, or political disagreements from influencing your decisions as an elected official — and how would you handle it when residents strongly disagree?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

While it is our job to listen to our community, we also have to look at all sides and gather information to make our decisions on what to vote on or what to advocate for etc. We, as one voting member of council of 5, can only do so much. We you can not make everyone happy. My goal is to listen and learn and find common ground wherever possible and explain my decisions. We are voted in to make decisions on the best interest of the Village and not our personal agendas.

Question 8

Can you tell us about your involvement in our community to date — whether through serving on committees, volunteering, or attending council meetings?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

I have attended many council meetings, some in person and more online. I have over the years send letters to Council on various things like Managing the flow of traffic thru time limited parking, over flow parking signage, paid parking issues from the perspective of a frontline business who receive lots of input from residents and visitors.

I volunteer for the Blue Bucket Winter Bells Campaign before Christmas for two years now.

As a business owner I have sponsored many events over the years, Festival of the Arts, Lights by the Lake, Bands of the Beach, July 1st Pet Parade etc.

Also, as a business owner, we are a collection station at both our stores for the Lions Food Bank donations. We also sell the Dogwood Lions Bingo Tickets at our Agassiz location.

Question 9

Council operates under specific rules of procedure, including Robert's Rules of Order and the Community Charter. How do you plan to educate yourself on these, and what commitment will you make to being prepared before your first council meeting?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

I have ordered the book of Roberts's Rules of Order already. I will study the Community Charter and be as prepared as possible for my first meeting. As a new Councillor, we will all be learning as we go as well.

Question 10

What is your top priority for your term in office in Harrison Hot Springs?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

I hope to be a part of bringing more trust and collaboration with residents, businesses, staff and Tourism in all aspects of running the Village.

Question 11

What do you believe is Harrison's most urgent infrastructure problem, and what would you do about it?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

Although I need to learn much more of the status of our different infrastructure problems. I do believe the water and sewer are of high importance. I will ask the questions to find out the current status. I would like to know more about our water reservoir like when it was built what capacity was it built for. How does that compare to what we would need now in case of emergencies with the changing climate and high risk of fire.

Question 12

What is your position on the Village's water and wastewater infrastructure, and how should council approach the significant capital costs involved?

Your response (maximum 500 words):

As above, I believe it has to be reviewed. What are the proposed changes? What are the engineers suggesting? Are these changes necessary or can it be spread out and worked on strategically?
These are things I would want to discuss and get clarification on.

LIGHTNING ROUND (YES / NO)

All candidates: check YES or NO for each question

Lightning Question 1

Do you support the Village continuing to pursue the Civic Campus project and a land exchange with School District 78 for a new elementary school?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Lightning Question 2

Would you support the Village pursuing a cost-sharing agreement with the District of Kent so Harrison residents pay the same fees at regional recreation facilities?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Lightning Question 3

Will you commit to holding council wages and expenses at 2026 levels for the next four years?

☒ YES

☐ NO

Lightning Question 4

Do you support stronger protection of Harrison's natural areas even if it limits some future development opportunities?

☒ YES

☐ NO

Lightning Question 5

Have you volunteered with a local organization in the last three years?

☒ YES

☐ NO

Lightning Question 6

Do you believe Harrison should actively encourage expansion of tourism businesses and new tourism investment over the next four years?

☒ YES

☐ NO

Lightning Question 7

Do you commit to respectful conduct to fellow council + staff even when you disagree?

☒ YES

☐ NO