

August 2025. **KATHY THRUN** for Ward 3 City Councilor

Quincy Votes Questionnaire

Why do you believe you are the best candidate to represent Quincy residents at this time?

I believe I'm the best candidate to represent Quincy residents because I will work hard and listen carefully. I've lived in Quincy for 50 years, raised my son here, and have long advocated for open space, smart development, and fiscal responsibility. My career includes leading large federal and international projects involving multiple stakeholders—experience that has sharpened my ability to solve complex problems, build consensus, and get results. I bring a steady, thoughtful approach, knowing when to collaborate and when to stand firm and fight for what's right for our residents. Quincy is my home, and I'm committed to its future.

I am adding a caveat to all my answers. My ability to fulfill the promises below depends on having like-minded individuals on the City Council. A majority (5 out of 9 city councilors) is necessary for either a no vote or a yes vote to stand.

What three issues are you most concerned about, and if elected, how will you address them?

*The three issues I'm most concerned about are **fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability**—all of which directly affect trust in government and the rising cost of living in Quincy.*

Quincy is carrying over \$1.6 billion in debt, combined with the city's negative Standard & Poor's rating, warns of future tax and rent increases. Wasteful spending—on runaway project costs, unnecessary statutes, and excessive pay raises—must stop. If elected, I will scrutinize every budget and debt proposal, ask tough questions, and vote “no” when spending doesn't serve the public. I've led large federal and international projects and understand how to manage complex finances while ensuring taxpayer dollars are respected.

***Transparency is broken.** Residents have asked for hearings on major expenditures—like \$850,000 statutes and citywide pay raises—and been ignored. Microphones are turned off at public meetings, and citizen speaking times have been reduced. I will change that. I'll hold regular public forums, demand meaningful public hearings, and improve communication through newsletters, social media, and the city's website. I will always return phone calls, emails, and letters. Only 4 of the 19 City Council committees have met more than 10 times in the past decade. Instead of pretending these committees are effective, I will push for real accountability—either they start functioning meaningfully or they should be eliminated.*

Accountability is essential. The current City Council votes yes on nearly everything from the Mayor. There's been little investigation into major financial losses in the pension fund or the fraud in Elder Services. I will use the Council's powers to monitor departments, insist on independent audits, and ensure laws are followed. Only 4 of 19 Council committees have met more than 10 times in 10 years—that will change.

My role as Councilor is to be a watchdog, a communicator, and a community advocate. I've lived in Quincy for 50 years, raised my family here, and I'm committed to rebuilding public trust. I've already begun preparing a free "Civics 101" course to help residents understand local government and their power within it—because real democracy starts with informed citizens.

If elected, what steps will you take to ensure responsiveness and clear communication between you and the Quincy community?

If elected, I will make it a priority to be accessible, responsive, and open with the people of Quincy. At the most basic level, I will always return phone calls, emails, and letters—because every resident deserves to be heard and treated with respect.

Beyond that, I'll keep the community informed through regular newsletters, social media updates, and information shared on the Quincy website. I want residents to know what's happening before decisions are made—not after.

No major decision should happen without public input. That's why I'll hold regular community events and push for meaningful public hearings where people can speak and be heard. Clear, two-way communication builds trust, and I'm committed to making that the standard in Quincy. 120 words

What do you plan to do about Quincy's \$1.6 billion debt?

*Quincy's \$1.6 billion in debt is a serious issue that cannot be ignored—especially for a city our size. Debt repayment, including interest, is now the city's **second-largest expense**, which means less funding is available for vital services like schools, parks, roads, sidewalks, and public safety. This level of debt also limits Quincy's future options and places a heavy burden on the next generation.*

First, we need to stop adding to the problem. I would support a freeze on all but truly essential new expenditures. Any future borrowing must be necessary, transparent, and subject to strict oversight and independent audits to prevent waste, mismanagement, or duplication.

Second, I would explore whether restructuring or refinancing existing debt could help lower our interest costs and free up funds for core city services.

Third, I believe we must begin developing a long-term strategy to pay down the debt, reduce interest payments, and ease the future financial burden on Quincy residents.

Addressing this debt won't be easy, but it's necessary. With careful planning and strong fiscal leadership, we can put Quincy on a more sustainable and responsible path forward.

What do you think is the most important role of being a City Councillor?

*Fundamentally, the City Council should serve as **the community's watchdog and voice**. The Council is most powerful during the **budgeting and debt approval processes**, where it has the authority to scrutinize how public funds are allocated and spent. Every spending request must be fully understood, justified, and aligned with the best interests of Quincy residents.*

*The City Council also has the responsibility to **oversee municipal departments**, ensuring their operations are legal, ethical, and transparent. Councilors must monitor the performance of both elected officials and department staff, and take appropriate action when failures or misconduct occur.*

*In addition, the Council has the authority to **hold investigations** into concerns raised by the public and to **create local laws and ordinances** that shape the future of our city. Being a City Councilor means actively listening to the community, asking tough questions, and using every available tool to promote accountability and good governance.*

What will you do to increase civic participation and voter turnout in Quincy?

*Civic participation and voter turnout in Quincy will improve when residents feel heard, informed, and empowered. To help make that happen, I will work to create a more **open, transparent, and accessible local government**. Public hearings and community events should not be rare—they should be a regular and expected part of how government operates. People are more likely to engage when they know their voices matter.*

*I also believe **civic education** is key. Many people don't realize how much local government affects their daily lives—whether it's schools, roads, safety, taxes, or development. That's why I've started developing a **free "Civics 101" course** to help residents understand how city government works and how they can get involved effectively.*

*In addition, I will use **multiple communication channels**—newsletters, social media, and the city website—to share important updates and invite participation. I'll respond to every call, email, and letter to make sure people know they're being listened to.*

When people are better informed and feel that their input truly matters, they are far more likely to vote and stay engaged. I'm committed to building that kind of connection between the city and its residents.