



The Mighty Mason 6

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October 11 at 8:28 PM · 🌐

Hello Citizens of Union!

I want to clear up some information that went out in Michelle Ozaki's Voter Information Pamphlet - The numbered items are quoted directly from Ms. Ozaki. The RESPONSE is my response to her statements.

1. "I want to look for ways to improve our community fire and EMS taxes which currently are the second highest in Mason County - while the number of emergency calls we run is one of the lowest"

RESPONSE: I believe you are comparing apples and oranges here - amount you pay in taxes and number of emergency service calls ran DO NOT relate. I believe you are getting a premium service for the small amount of tax you pay. The fire district has some of the nicest, newest fire trucks in Mason County. We have the THE best medical equipment a BLS ambulance can currently get. We have the most trained volunteers. We have the best leadership in the county. We hope you never need to call 911, and have

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trained volunteers. We have the best leadership in the county. We hope you never need to call 911, and have us respond, but if you needed us, wouldn't you want us to have all the currently available, best tools and equipment to help you? Because of our current tax rate, the fire district was able to purchase BRAND NEW AED's, with clear CPR technology, and an automated CPR machine - but we are always looking for the next best thing, to provide the best care we possibly can.

Side note: "currently the second highest" taxes - Does Ms. Ozaki know what Banked Capacity is? Does she know what the taxing rules and regulations are for a fire district? They are very different than Public Works, or the county general budget/taxes. If you want to know, schedule an appointment with the fire district to find out. The MAXIMUM the fire district can collect is \$1.85/thousand - it's not a guarantee, based on the assessor and how they value the fire district. The department works very hard to be fiscally responsible with the taxpayers money, while providing the best service possible with the amount we are able to collect.

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the best service possible with the amount we are able to collect.

Also – I find this to be simple math – a smaller population (Union) needs a higher tax rate to provide the level of service we currently do, because the population and total assessed value of Fire District 6 is less than other districts. Why are Fire District 6's taxes higher than other districts of similar size? Simple – we have paid staff, highly trained volunteers, excellent equipment, plus many other benefits to our community – did you know, if YOUR ambulance in Union transports you to the hospital, you will never see a bill for it? Did you know YOUR fire district is one of 8 that can transport injured people to the hospital? Even districts that CAN transport, don't always have the staff or volunteers to support the program – that means COSTLY rides in with a paramedic from Shelton – that you WILL get billed for. If you want to talk about the other benefits YOUR fire district provides to YOU, head down to the station and chat with the staff and volunteers; something Ms. Ozaki has never done.

2. "I want to help resolve the problem that (in the last three years) has caused five Union resident volunteer

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with the staff and volunteers; something Ms. Ozaki has never done.

2. "I want to help resolve the problem that (in the last three years) has caused five Union resident volunteer firefighter /EMTs to no longer serve our community and has led to legal claims against our fire district."

RESPONSE: I am trying to figure out who the 5 volunteers are. I know of 4 - 1 was let go for disciplinary reasons, 1 retired, and 2 quit. The "5th Volunteer" is maybe an ex paid employee who was let go - he was a volunteer before he was hired. The legal claims against the fire district are from the former volunteer who was let go for disciplinary reasons - he now has a personal vendetta to destroy the fire department; The scary part - he supports Ms. Ozaki.

3. "I want to improve fire district transparency for myself (if elected) and the other fire commissioners by establishing on-line reporting of business decisions, taxes, expenses, budgets, meeting minutes, videos, etc.. I want to move the monthly commissioner meetings to the evening so that everybody in Union has the opportunity to attend and

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everybody in Union has the opportunity to attend and help shape our fire department"

RESPONSE: The fire district is transparent. All you need to do is ask for the information. Maintaining an online web presence takes an incredible amount of time; we feel our time is better spent training and performing duties of emergency response.

REMEMBER - you can always get any of this information, just ask for it. The commissioner meetings used to be in the evening - they were less attended than the current meeting time.

4. "I want to work for you, to ensure you are getting the best fire protection and emergency medical services possible (and with my accounting skills) ensure we deliver this protection at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayer (you and me)."

RESPONSE: I'm curious how she is going to "ensure" we are getting the best fire protection and emergency service possible, without a background in fire and emergency medical services. Has Ms. Ozaki ever used her accounting skills in a local, county or state government? Has she ever used the BARS system? If I

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government? Has she ever used the BARS system? If I buy a flashlight for personal use, it may cost me \$25 for a good one. If I need one for the fire department, the NFPA tag is thrown on it, and the same flashlight may cost \$100. Same goes for most everything in the fire and emergency medical world. A breathing air refill station cost the fire district \$60,000 – the same system, for a SCUBA shop cost \$20,000 – the difference? Certifications the "fire service" version must obtain to be used in our industry.

In closing, we have a lot of questions about Ms. Ozaki, that remain unanswered. We have invited her down to the station to meet the "team" and chat with her, but we have yet to see her...I feel like she is being pushed by disgruntled community members to take a position of power, solely to get revenge. I believe this WILL hurt your emergency services in Union. I also notice she is not citing any specific ways to "improve" the fire and emergency medical services provided, just a generality.

Would you vote for an armchair quarterback, getting information from disgruntled ex-members of the fire department, that has never been to the fire

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Would you vote for an armchair quarterback, getting information from disgruntled ex-members of the fire department, that has never been to the fire department to talk to any of the volunteers or staff, or seen how we operate with her own eyes?

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