

Scottsdale Independent: What do you think separates you from your opponent?

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In addition to fighting to protect Scottsdale's special character and high quality of life, the other hallmark of my tenure on the City Council was fighting against wasteful spending and special-interest handouts. Unfortunately, my opponent is doing just the opposite. While he claims to run an efficient and austere city government, the facts prove otherwise:

- Before he retired as city treasurer, now Councilman David Smith publicly stated the City Council was balancing the operating budget not by cutting expenses, but by cutting contributions to the capital budget. Unsurprisingly that cupboard is now bare, which is why City Hall has asked Scottsdale voters twice in the last three years to increase property taxes to fund infrastructure maintenance which should be funded from general fund revenues.
- Scottsdale residents pay the second highest general fund cost per resident of any city in the Valley – only Tempe residents pay more.
- Scottsdale has more employees per resident than any other city in the Valley. Interestingly, staffing for public safety (which should be the number one priority of municipal government) isn't the issue; those numbers are right in the middle of the pack. Where Scottsdale is overstaffed is with executives, 155 of whom make six-figure salaries.
- The mayor and his allies often tout the bar district as an "economic driver." Actually, the bar district costs Scottsdale residents money. According to a study done by then-City Treasurer Smith, the bar district contributes less than \$400,000 in annual revenues to the city but costs \$1.2 million annually just to police the streets. And that doesn't even count the costs for maintenance (street cleaning, etc.) or code enforcement.
- In 2014, the mayor and his allies on the City Council voted (over my objections) to give golf pro Phil Mickelson about \$2 million dollars in taxpayer gifts in the form of a new clubhouse and other improvements to the city-owned McDowell Mountain Golf Course – improvements his lease required him to fund!
- For 10 years, the city has been sitting on 80 acres of prime land at 94th and Bell. Every year Scottsdale taxpayers shell out roughly \$3 million in debt service to hold on to that raw land. It's time to sell it and use the proceeds to fund some of our truly worthy and needed capital projects.

There are more Scottsdale city budget outrages than I have room to mention in this column. But the bottom line is clear: **Scottsdale needs new leadership.**

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