

# 2025 Council Candidate Comparison — Part 1 of 4

Medicine Hat United Ratepayers Association (MHURA.org)

Informed Voters • Accountable Leadership • Transparent Government

Category	Bill Cocks	Gord Cowan	Robert Dumanowski
Fiscal Responsibility	Emphasizes balancing act and maintaining reserves; limited new fiscal plan.	Focuses on reserves and reducing spending but lacks specific fiscal roadmap.	Supports transparent, disciplined reserve management and long-term stability.
Taxes & Utilities (Affordability)	Believes Medicine Hat remains affordable; does not prioritize rate relief.	Advocates tax freeze, removal of fees, and efficiency improvements.	Focuses on efficiency and balanced growth; no direct tax reduction plan.
Financial Literacy	Strong legal and council background; familiar with municipal budgeting.	Business owner experience; understands budgeting and operations.	Experienced councillor with proven record in financial oversight.
MCAF Fee	Views as a valid revenue tool to balance budgets.	Describes it as a tax grab; supports elimination through efficiency gains.	Open to reviewing fee structure; cautious about removing without offset plan.
Transparency	Advocates public access to reports and data summaries.	Calls transparency overused but supports basic public access.	Strongly supports plain-language public reporting and accessible financial data.
Business Climate	Supports current business tax balance; cautious about changes.	Promotes spending reduction; emphasizes simplicity in policy.	Encourages efficiency, competitiveness, and balanced tax approach.

Safety & Homelessness	Acknowledges safety concerns; supports housing-first model.	Believes police and community groups should lead; limited new strategy.	Supports coordinated, multi-agency strategy to address root causes.
Professionalism	Professional, respectful, and ethical communication focus.	Steady, consistent, and professional in public approach.	Respectful, experienced, and trusted community leadership style.
Collaboration	Prioritizes rebuilding council teamwork and accountability.	Values cooperation; pragmatic about compromise.	Experienced consensus-builder focused on respectful debate.

## 2025 Council Candidate Comparison — Part 2 of 4

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Category	Cheryl Phaff	Brock Hale	Ron Fedoruk
Fiscal Responsibility	Focuses on disciplined budgeting, efficiency, and eliminating pet projects.	Advocates common-sense spending and asking, 'Can we afford this?'	Acknowledges \$28M deficit; supports debt policy and infrastructure-only spending.
Taxes & Utilities (Affordability)	Proposes a 3-year municipal tax freeze by cutting wasteful projects.	Wants fairer taxes and reduced red tape to ease burdens on residents.	Prioritizes affordability by streamlining operations and growing tax base.
Financial Literacy	MBA graduate and business owner; strong financial background.	Math major and teacher; confident interpreting budgets and learning from experts.	Experienced entrepreneur; managed finances across multiple businesses.
MCAF Fee (Stance)	Review — supports assessment with potential phase-out.	Review — open to eliminating without burdening taxpayers.	Eliminate — phase out through efficiency and growth.
Transparency	Supports open datasets, plain-language reports, and accountability metrics.	Wants more plain-language summaries and fewer closed meetings.	Advocates for audited reports and simplified financial comparisons for the public.
Business Climate	Supports competitive taxes, faster approvals, and balanced growth.	Open to reviewing business tax rates to attract investment responsibly.	Suggests comparing with peer cities and lowering business tax over time.

Safety & Homelessness	Plans coordinated enforcement, affordable housing, and job growth.	Emphasizes compassion and collaboration across services.	Proposes police sub-stations and a 'community call line' work initiative.
Professionalism	Pledges respect, integrity, and professional conduct; 'Sanity at City Hall.'	Believes in calm, positive communication and public engagement.	Accessible and accountable; emphasizes respect and active listening.
Collaboration	Focus on early dialogue, shared goals, and practical teamwork.	Encourages respectful debate and valuing differing views.	Prioritizes common ground and cooperative problem-solving.

## 2025 Council Candidate Comparison — Part 3 of 4

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Category	Jay Hitchen	Randall Noble	Kevin Monson
Fiscal Responsibility	Notes past surplus; believes in balanced budgets and responsible staffing review.	Believes City must live within means and require quotes for spending.	Views reliance on reserves as a hidden deficit; wants to avoid non-essential projects.
Taxes & Utilities (Affordability)	Advocates responsible budgeting and cost review to manage rate pressures.	Supports a temporary tax freeze while developing fair long-term plan.	Wants to avoid further tax or utility increases; calls for provincial/federal advocacy.
Financial Literacy	Experienced in business budgeting (radio and communications).	Comfortable with budgeting from restaurant management experience.	Limited accounting background; open to learning and consulting experts.
MCAF Fee (Stance)	Review — believes removal would need measured approach.	Eliminate — supports lowering or removing fee if possible.	Eliminate — supports removal but only with replacement plan.
Transparency	Supports mid-term public budget progress reports for accountability.	Wants simple, clear presentations accessible to all residents.	Advocates public-friendly reports and more open meetings.
Business Climate	Supports competitive rates and provincial collaboration to balance business tax.	Would freeze business taxes to support local economy.	Hesitant to lower business tax; prefers incentives and fee reductions.

Safety & Homelessness	Supports MH Community Housing; proposes Hat Safe rebate program for security.	Wants stronger coordination with nonprofits and other governments.	Focuses on affordability, mental health, and root causes of homelessness.
Professionalism	Believes in respectful, fact-based communication and professionalism.	Commits to listening and respecting all viewpoints.	Values optimism, integrity, and communication training.
Collaboration	Emphasizes relationship-building and understanding communication styles.	Believes collaboration creates better ideas and outcomes.	Supports respectful debate and diverse representation on council.

# 2025 Council Candidate Comparison — Part 4 of 4

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Category	Kaleb Orge	Bill Cocks	Gord Cowan
Fiscal Responsibility	Warns of long-term insolvency; opposes new debt; advocates stricter oversight.	Believes City is in surplus; supports balancing revenues with services.	Focuses on maintaining reserves; wants spending restraint and efficiency.
Taxes & Utilities (Affordability)	Opposes adding debt; warns tax freezes without reform create deficits.	Believes Medicine Hat is affordable; prioritizes quality of life over lowest cost.	Supports three-year tax freeze and removing utility fees.
Financial Literacy	Understands budgets through personal finance discipline and analytical mindset.	Experienced lawyer and council veteran; strong grasp of municipal finances.	Business owner; routinely managed financial records and operations.
MCAF Fee (Stance)	Keep — calls elimination ‘a zero-sum game’; prefers other offsets.	Keep — considers it part of city revenue structure.	Eliminate — calls it a tax grab and wants removal.
Transparency	Supports answering all non-confidential inquiries; honest, candid communication.	Supports public access to data; prefers simple reporting methods.	Believes residents deserve open access to city financial information.
Business Climate	Defers to experts; believes COMCO should manage energy operations strategically.	Supports current tax model as fair balance between business and residents.	Believes reduced spending will stabilize taxes and attract business.

Safety & Homelessness	Respects professionals already addressing issues; advocates data-driven tracking.	Acknowledges challenges; supports return to 'housing first' solutions.	Supports working with nonprofits to manage homelessness initiatives.
Professionalism	Uses humor and honesty to engage; values transparency and respect.	Committed to politeness, respect, and honesty in public service.	Sees professionalism as essential expectation of the role.
Collaboration	Encourages friendly competition among councillors to reduce tension.	Advocates communication and teamwork between council and CAO.	Believes collaboration is key to progress; values teamwork and consensus.