

2024 Candidate Forum- State Representative 19B

11/04/2024

Sponsored by:



Schedule of Events

11:30 – 11:50 Lunch

11:50 – Tom Partridge, Noon Rotary President

Introductions – Brad Meier, President/CEO, Owatonna Chamber of Commerce & Tourism

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM Forum Moderator: Julie Rethemeier, Federated Insurance (retired)

Format of Forum

Questions

- No questions provided to the candidates in advance
- Questions from the audience will be reviewed and passed on to the moderator if appropriate and if time allows
- Candidates will alternate responses to each questions and will be allowed one minute/30 seconds for each question-should the candidates go past their allotted time, the moderator will cut them off
- Opening statement (two minutes) (yellow card 60 sec.), red card (stop)
- Answer question (one minute, 30 seconds): yellow card (45 sec.), red card (stop)
- Closing statement (two minutes) (yellow card 60 sec.), red card (stop)

***Candidate bios were submitted by the candidates and were not modified or edited by the hosting organizations.**

***Bios of candidates are on back side of agenda**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE 19B



Edelgard Fernandez Mejia (State Representative 19B Candidate)

- My full name is Edelgard Fernandez Mejia. I am 50 years old and the father of three (20, 16 and 13).
- I was born in Guanajuato, Mexico and have a bachelor's degree in communications and public relations from Universidad Santa Fe. I moved to Minnesota in 2000 and worked in Wilmar as a Migrant Labor Representative. A few years later, I was hired as the Director of Multicultural Affairs and Head Soccer Coach at Ridgewater College (I received a scholarship to earn an Advanced National Coaching License from the United States Soccer Coaches Association).
- I moved to Owatonna in 2013 to work at Riverland Community College as a Multicultural Enrollment Advisor and the Head Soccer Coach. My current position is Director of Admissions at South Central College splitting time between campuses in Faribault and North Mankato.
- My involvement with the community includes being a member of the Board of Directors for the Owatonna Public Library, Owatonna Soccer Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters Board and I am a Rotarian. I am a graduate of the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce Leadership Program and am active with several of United Way's initiatives, as well as the former "CultureFest" Organization. I have served as a soccer coach and referee and have continued to organize the Youth Soccer Program for Owatonna Parks and Recreation every Spring.
- Having become a United States Citizen I have experienced what it is like coming to a new country and the importance of having and gaining the skills and education to be able to contribute to your community.



Tom Sexton (State Representative 19B Candidate)

- I am a graduate of the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management, with a B.S. in Business Administration, a graduate of Embry-Riddle University with a Master of Aeronautical Sciences, a US Air Force Air Command and Staff College graduate with a Master of Military Operational Art and Science, a US Army War College graduate with a Master of Strategic Studies, and a graduate of highly selective National Security Policy Program.
- Our nation offered me the opportunity to serve in the US Air Force for over 26 years, achieving the rank of Colonel (O-6), serving as a Command Pilot, Squadron Commander, combat veteran, and former US Army War College instructor prior to retiring in September 2012.
- Returning briefly to Waseca, I recharacterized my skill sets and became a construction project manager in the energy industry. Again, others recognized my skills and offered me an executive management position in Houston, TX, where held the role of Vice President of Construction Management for a noted Engineering, Procurement, and Construction firm.
- Retiring again in 2021, I returned to Waseca and started volunteering as the Co-Chair of the City of Waseca Planning Commission, member of the Waseca County Planning Commission, Chairman of LakeFest starting in 2023, the Waseca American Legion Honor Guard, and active involvement as a member of the Knights of Columbus (Sacred Heart), Waseca American Legion Post 228, Waseca VFW Post 1642, and the Waseca Lakes Association.
- My spouse, Jeanne, and I will celebrate our 38th wedding anniversary in September 2024. We have two sons, both US Air Force officers, married, and two wonderful grandchildren.

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