

**Question 2: What constituencies in the City of Clemson are not being heard? How would you seek out their opinions and address their concerns?**

**Crossie Cox:** During my terms, I have met with, talked to, and swapped emails with many of our townsmen. I honestly believe that our residents have a voice when needed. Perhaps our University students who live off-campus may not be as involved as others. City Council and the City of Clemson staff welcome and encourage ALL city residents to reach out to us for information, advice, assistance, and support. MANY residents have communicated with me for help and I have responded positively -- email is not always the best communication tool -- I encourage a personal meeting or a phone call to receive quicker response. Residents should be proactive, not reactive, if they want their concerns addressed. Residents have the opportunity to know what is being discussed at Council meetings by referring to the council meeting agenda on the City-wide website ([www.cityofclemson.org](http://www.cityofclemson.org)) on Thursday before each bi-weekly meeting. AND all special meetings, other than those relating to personnel matters, are open to the public and reported on by the press.

**Eunice Lehmacher:** Sometimes the needs of businesses and the university are heard louder than the needs of the residents. The needs of the less affluent areas of the city and its residents aren't always heard. I've lived here long enough to know that not everyone who lives in Clemson works for the university. The needs of the university are important, but equally important are the needs of each voter, child, small business, neighborhood, and local organization. The leaders of Clemson also need to consider the needs of future residents, those who have not yet moved here or are not even born. Through sustainable development, I hope we can make Clemson a great place to live and study both today and for many years to come.

As a City Council member, I will welcome calls and emails and will respond to each one. I value comments of voters on issues before and during city council meetings. I want to hear from all sides of issues before I make my decisions.

**Christine Minor:** There are a few constituencies in the City of Clemson that are not being heard, but are easy to see. They include, but are not limited to the following:

- The "average" resident who has to travel our streets to work daily in increasing traffic, who can't buy a pair of shoes for their child without traveling to another community, and who can't really afford the housing prices in the community.
- The struggling resident who doesn't see their place in a community where small condos are well over 100K and livable houses under \$200K are rare, or can't find reasonable rent because renting per bedroom to students makes apartments for families hard to find.
- The residents that stand on the side of the street and watch the bus that follows only ONE route around Clemson pass them by because it is full.
- The small business owner who struggles to pay rent in a string of partially empty storefronts hoping to make enough money in 9 months for the year, but is failing because no one can get to their business due to lack of parking, congestion, and people avoiding the area because "traffic is bad."

Seeking solutions takes listening; listening to constituencies where they are, where WE gather in OUR community.

**Jim Oswald:** The Community as a whole has been pretty quiet for the first 6 years of my tenure. But with change and growth comes stresses and friction. It's not that a community was not being heard, it is that they are not being vocal enough. The full time residents and the taxpayers have great ideas, issues needing solutions, and they need to be heard. But first, they have to speak. I am very happy that people are starting to attend and participate. It gives us valuable insight that we need to make informed decisions. I also believe the Minority Community is somewhat under represented on the surface. But I believe that there are at least 4 current Council Members who are aware and sympathetic to their concerns. With a non-minority Council, I would encourage the Minority Community to seek out those members and take advantage of their interest.

**Drake McNeary:** Attending a council meeting and presenting your opinions during the public session is a great resource. However, it takes awareness of the opportunity, time to prepare and attend (and possibly childcare), and may not be in the comfort zone for many citizens. This affects all citizens in our community, but often marginalizes those with less means, or those who are more transient. We should be more proactive in seeking public opinion through social media, online fora, and informal community meetings. It would also be good to see the city or local organizations provide unbiased support to community members in preparing presentations for the public session of council session.

**Mark Cato:** Most importantly, we have to empower constituents; to attend meetings and to stay informed. Our community needs to be more active than reactive. Council needs to be more approachable and available. I would want to meet with neighborhoods regularly to discuss their concerns.

**John Ducworth:** All citizens are encouraged to address council members during public session and individually at any time. A council member needs to make certain to avail themselves by phone, email and personal connections to all constituents.

Over the past four years, I've enjoyed numerous opportunities to interact with citizens. In each situation, I felt direct communication was the best way to learn about their concerns. Participation in community events and organizations also offers opportunities to be approached and interact with members of the community. Personal communication is extremely important as too much can be subject to misinterpretation on email blasts and social media. We have a small but diverse community. If constituencies need different avenues for communication, we need to work with leaders in those areas to determine what they feel is most effective.