

OUR VIEW/ENDORSEMENT: CITY COUNCIL AT LARGE

Pick Macor's, Tomanek's passion for, commitment to Duluth

They each have deep roots in Duluth. They're invested, have run or are running businesses here, and are committed to where they live. They also share a passion for giving back and helping and serving others.



Tomanek



Macor

In the three-way race for two open At Large seats on the Duluth City Council this fall, candidate Joe Macor and incumbent Terese Tomanek — each with clear, specific, and good ideas about making Duluth a better place — have been shining brightly since before the primary. On Election Day Nov. 2, eligible voters in Duluth can pick Macor and Tomanek to make good on their promise.

Macor and his wife own and operate a foster care facility in their Fond du Lac neighborhood for adults with developmental disabilities. Macor also has spent 21 years as a volunteer youth sports coach. He is head of the Denfeld Junior Football League and founder of the Northland Youth Football Conference. For the past four winters, he has been the Alpine ski coach at Duluth East High School and at his alma mater Duluth Denfeld High School. He also serves on the board of the Irving Community Club and on GND Development Alliance.

In addition, Macor has a law enforcement degree from Fond Du Lac Tribal and Community College in Cloquet.

He's not yet polluted by politics. His only soiree into elected service was a run last year for St. Louis County Board.

"It's through those things that I hope to bring a well-rounded perspective to the City Council," Macor said at a candidate forum last month held virtually and co-sponsored by the News Tribune and Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce. "Duluth is an amazing city. People want to be here. Businesses want to be here. We have a city that people want to be a part of. There are so many strengths in this city, the people most of all and the natural resources that provide employment and recreation for so many people. We're leaders here in Duluth in health care, education, aviation, tourism, (and the) shipping industry. You know, all of these advantages are things we should build on as we move to the future, focusing on economic development to become a destination not only for visitors but for businesses."

To attract and retain businesses and industries, Duluth can start, Macor said, by doing more with its red tape-reduction initiative and by hiring more plan reviewers in City Hall to ensure the timely completion of projects. Effective economic development brings resources that can then be invested in our police and fire departments, fixing streets, and other services, he said.

"If a person or business is ready to invest in Duluth, we've got to make sure we're ready to accept them," said Macor. "We have an amazing city with wonderful parks and amazing police and fire departments. They desperately all need funding (and) streets need fixing, so increasing our revenue through economic development is the best way to meet some of our needs."

Tomanek was the unanimous choice last summer by Duluth city councilors to replace Councilor Barb Russ after she resigned over health concerns. Immediately, Tomanek helped pass a mask mandate in Duluth

that became a model for other communities and the state. She also has been a budget hawk; an effective advocate for creating child-care options; a supporter of fully funding law enforcement; and a driving force for using TIF, tax abatement, and other tools to spur housing development.

Tomanek ran a chiropractic clinic in Duluth for 15 years. More recently, with a master's degree in divinity, she has worked as a chaplain for Essentia Health and at The Hills Youth and Family Services, formerly known as Woodland Hills.

Her public service has included stints on the Duluth Human Rights Commission, library board, Marshall School board, Lake Superior Foundation board, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, the Duluth Public Utilities Commission, the advisory boards for Glensheen and the Great Lakes Aquarium, and the City Council Intergovernmental Relations Committee, which is the council's liaison to the Duluth School Board and St. Louis County Board.

Tomanek's focus and priorities, she said, include doing what the council can to remove barriers to employment and to equitably distribute federal pandemic relief funds.

"I try to limit my priorities to two or three, but that list keeps growing," she said. "My first one is diversifying our housing options. We need housing across the board, and affordable housing is an important part of that. The City Council has appropriated \$19 million of the \$58 million (in federal pandemic-relief money Duluth received) to affordable housing. What we're going to do is we're going to start a new affordable housing trust fund."

Tomanek recognizes that Duluth also needs housing options for seniors, young families, and others. "Economic growth depends on getting housing for everyone," she said.

Also running for Duluth City Council At Large is Azrin Awal, who moved with her family from Bangladesh to Minnesota when she was 3. She's studying public health at the University of Minnesota Duluth and working as a youth advocate. At UMD, she founded a chapter of the NAACP. She also has advocated for Duluth's Homeless Person's Bill of Rights, the arts, and, as a survivor herself, victims of sexual assault.

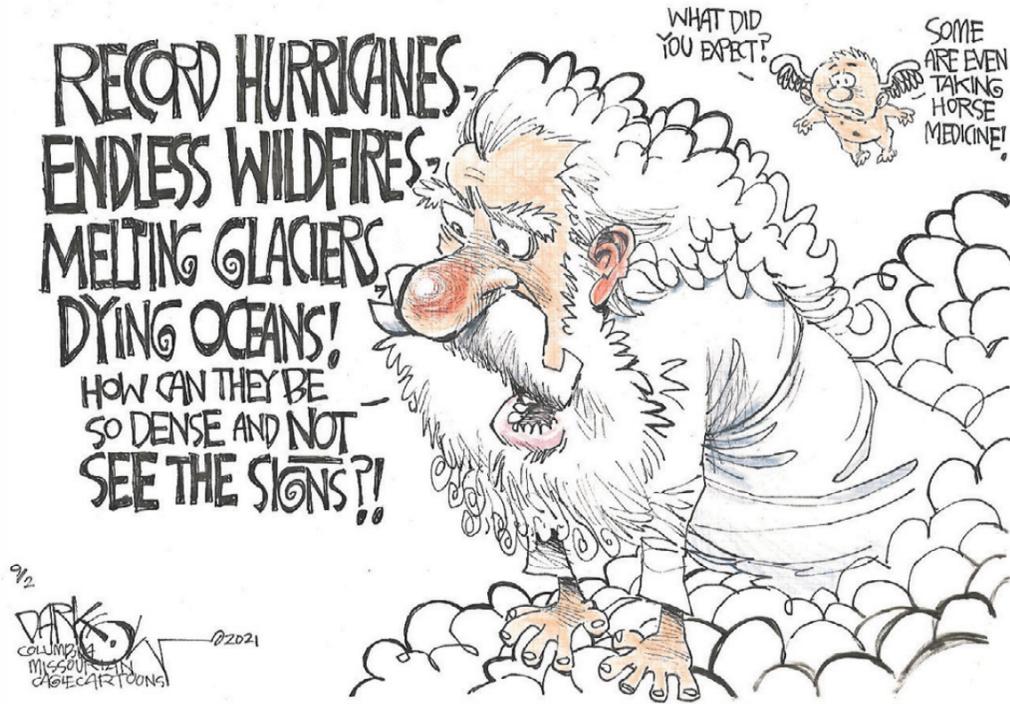
A bit overextended right now, it seems, but Awal certainly can be encouraged by Duluthians to stay involved and to seek public office again, perhaps after she graduates.

Duluth architect Tim Meyer similarly can be encouraged to continue giving back to his city. While his name will be on the ballot in Duluth on Nov. 2, Meyer announced in August his withdrawal from the at-large City Council race.

ABOUT THIS ENDORSEMENT: This News Tribune endorsement was determined entirely by the newspaper's editorial board. Board members are identified daily atop the Opinion page and online at duluthnewstribune.com/opinion.

WATCH THE FORUM: The Duluth City Council candidate forums sponsored by the News Tribune and Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce are posted for viewing, on demand, at duluthnewstribune.com.

CARTOONIST'S VIEW



John Darkow / Cagle Cartoons

OTHER VIEW

Despite media hype, this year's wildfires don't top the one you've never heard of

Wildfires in Oregon and California this summer made spectacular headlines. Press releases issued from the state capitals blamed drought

— induced by man-caused climate change, they said — the worst fires in history. But was climate-change really the underlying cause? Were the fires really the worst in history?

Peshtigo today is a small city in northeastern Wisconsin, but 150 years ago, the site of the largest and deadliest single wildfire in North American history.

On October 8, 1871, a great wildfire destroyed a thriving 19th-century lumber community and surroundings. More than 1.2 million acres burned in Marinette County, Wisconsin; parts of Michigan's adjoining Upper Peninsula; and Door County across Green Bay.

Some dispute that embers from the Peshtigo fire ignited forests across Green Bay. But a boat captain logged into his journal that he had observed immense fireballs lofted across the 17-mile gap of water toward the peninsula.

The Peshtigo fire broke out the same day as the Great Chicago Fire. Both were driven by strong winds from the southwest. Ironically, the lumber used in constructing post-Civil War Chicago had come from Marinette County.

Legend has it Mrs. O'Leary kept a cow behind her house in southwest Chicago. A hired hand responsible for

milking joined a card game next door, leaving behind a burning lantern. The cow kicked over the lamp, igniting nearby hay. Wind quickly spread the fire to nearby structures. It raced for downtown Chicago as an ever-expanding wall of fire. The result is well known. O'Leary's residence survived, but a hundred thousand city residents were left homeless.

Less known is what happened 250 miles north. Lumbering was in its heyday, albeit primitive by modern standards. Lumberjacks left behind 4-foot-plus-tall stumps. Trimmings fueled wildfires.

The months before had been exceptionally dry. That afternoon, woodsmen set small fires in harvested areas. A strong, unpredicted wind arrived. The separate fires combined into an ever-expanding wall of fire that raced northeast.

Peshtigo residents smelled smoke and observed a red glow in the southwest. Soon, huge firebrands flew overhead and set fire around town.

Fully aware of disaster, people on the west side of the Peshtigo River rushed toward the wooden bridge. In the confusion, many fell into the river and drowned. Herds of cattle and horses, freed from corrals, trampled fleeing residents. Some survivors remained in the water as the firestorm passed overhead.

The better-prepared brought along blankets that protected against intense heat. As daylight arrived, they surveyed the blackened scene in shock.

By official count, more

than 1,200 perished within the city and surroundings. Experts believe the dead totaled at least 2,500, many being among unnamed recent arrivals. By comparison, the Chicago fire claimed about 300 lives.

With the telegraph destroyed, Peshtigo was temporarily isolated. Messengers informed the outside world what had happened.

East Coast newspapers fixated on Chicago and ignored Peshtigo. It became a forgotten footnote to history.

Contrast 2021's summer of wildfires "out West." These need not have happened but for official negligence and poor management that have turned many western forests, now overgrown with brush, diseased and insect-infested trees, and tinder into disasters waiting to happen.

Before the Europeans arrived, Native Americans prevented build-up of excess combustibles in their homelands. Natural fire and controlled burns limited what in modern times became frequent major wildfires.

Officials bowing to pressure from activists have transformed wise management practices into the massive wildfires of recent summers.

Utility lines and climate change were never primary causes. These serve as scapegoats for derelict governors' offices.

No, the worst wildfire in U.S. history happened 150 years ago in Wisconsin, not in Oregon or California in 2021.

William D. Balgord, Ph.D., heads Environmental & Resources Technology, Inc. in Middleton, Wisconsin.



WILLIAM BELGORD

READERS' VIEWS

Lopsided reaction to Line 3 completion

The Weekend Opinion section on Oct. 2 titled "Reaction to the Completion of Line 3" garnered one "con" opinion from a Native American activist (33 lines of print) and "pro" opinions from one Republican congressperson, 10 Republican state senators, and two Republican state representatives (226 lines of print). It seems that the News Tribune's support of extractive (including fossil fuel) industries is so strong that it feels comfortable dispensing with any pretext of being "fair and balanced"

(a la Fox News!).
**Roger B. Day
Duluth**

People make mistakes

Do our past mistakes define us? Is there redemption for silly things we may have said in the past in a state of fury, being intoxicated or in love? Should we be fired or sued because of a moment of insanity?

"To err is human but to forgive is divine."
**Kelly Abu Azzam
Duluth**

Readers' Views and Local Views

Letters to the editor are a critical part of the community dialogue, and the News Tribune attempts to publish all letters of opinion meeting our requirements.

Letters are limited to 300 words, must be the original work of the author and must be exclusive to the News Tribune. Letters are edited for style, space, accuracy and civility.

Letter writers are limited to one published submission every 30 days.

With rare exceptions, the News Tribune does not publish poetry; letters that are anonymous, libelous or attack other writers; consumer-complaint letters; thank-you letters; or letters generated by political

or special-interest campaigns. We will consider exclusive Local View columns of 600 words or fewer. Authors should possess unique insights, and their commentaries should demonstrate greater knowledge of their subject than letters.

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