

RICHFIELD VILLAGE BOARD

Four compete for two trustee seats

Incumbents Brandner, Wolff opposed by Zoulek, Neureuther

By Joe VanDeLaarschot
jvan@conley.net.com
262-306-5054

RICHFIELD — Incumbents Rock Brandner and Tom Wolff are competing for their seats on the Village Board with challengers Danah Zoulek and Bill Neureuther. Zoulek is also running against incumbent John Jeffords for village president.

Here are profiles of the candidates for the Village Board.

Why are you running for office?

BRANDNER: To continue to help the village of Richfield be a safe, excellent place to live with realistic budgets.

NEUREUTHER: As a lifelong resident, I am passionate about working for a better Richfield. I enjoy serving Richfield, where I've lived all my life. My 20 years of experience as an elected official for Richfield can benefit our taxpayers. I'm also running because I get along well with people of all ages and I understand how government works. I'm proud of decisions we made on the Town Board in prior years and hope to help the Village Board make more wise decisions for the future. We've a great community and need to work together to keep it that way.

WOLFF: I'm running for the Richfield Village Board to continue the fiscal restraint and conservative tax policies that have made Richfield such a wonderful place to live for the past 20 years. I love the country way of life we have carved out and want to see future generations enjoy the same ben-

efits and lifestyle that current residents enjoy.

ZOULEK: The current Village Board is "out of control" — village taxes were raised 28.55 percent for 2019 while many other communities in the county either froze or reduced taxes. Richfield taxes like a village, but provides services like a town. Richfield has no sewer and water, no public library, no high school, no community center and no municipal police or fire department. Yet despite this lack of services, Richfield's total Public Works Budget increased a whopping 256 percent from \$1,275,704 in 2017 up to \$3,259,563 in 2019. Richfield also spends far too much on legal fees (over \$400,000 since 2014) and on administrator salaries (over \$127,000 per year). As a Richfield Village Board member I will eliminate all wasteful spending so taxes can be reduced instead of increased.

What makes you stand out from your opponent(s)?

BRANDNER: I have 25 years of experience with Richfield government, which includes 14 years as town treasurer when it was an elected position, 11 years as elected village trustee, since Richfield converted from township to village. I am a member of the Daniel Boone Conservation League and National Rifle Association. I support Kwik Trip Truck Stop, support protecting Richfield groundwater. I'm a proud veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. I support fiscal responsibility of the

village. I'm asking for your votes in the April 2 election.

NEUREUTHER: I don't like to judge or criticize my opponents. Anyone who takes the time to run for office should be commended. I am committed to the following: A. Keeping our village safe for all residents to live, work, play and travel; B. Keeping our taxes low and being held accountable for how your tax dollars are spent; C. Adhering to our Land Use Plan and enforcing all current zoning regulations; D. Bringing more jobs to Richfield by recruiting more businesses for our Industrial Park; E. Planning for the future of Richfield; F. Working with Washington County officials on matters that will benefit us both.

WOLFF: I stand out from the other candidates in a couple ways. I believe in setting examples rather than observing. I have coached Richfield soccer and Richfield baseball through the years — and have supported those outstanding organizations whenever possible. I've served on the Fries Lake School Board for many years to make sure students (including my children) received the best possible education available. And I served on the Review Board and Park Board to provide citizen input for village functions. Participation in the community is essential to maintaining the excellent assets we have in Richfield — and I want to do my part. After two years on the Village Board, I think I have a better understanding of how the village runs and how to best guide its future. The next two years will see a lot of opportunity and I want to be part of that.

ZOULEK: As Richfield's next village president or trustee, I will support term limits, common-sense conservative values, greater citizen input and restored ethics. I believe in holding government officials accountable for their actions and, as a citizen, I have done that. Richfield ignored long-standing, well-settled, state law and wasted over \$250,000 of tax money for legal fees when they tried to prevent me from restoring my property so that I could help disabled veterans and autistic children. I took the Village Board all the way to the Wisconsin Court of Appeals and won a huge legal victory for the people I want to help. As a Village Board member, I will fight with that same level of tireless tenacity and dogged determination to protect the rights of every Richfield resident.

We must find money to fix our local roads, not by raising taxes, but instead by eliminating wasteful spending on unnecessary legal fees, excessive salaries and inappropriate business deals that only benefit a few privileged insiders while hurting everyone else. We need term limits to eliminate this type of irresponsible, unethical and illegal behavior.

Two of the incumbents that I am running against have served in one capacity or another in Richfield's government for 30 years or more. That's simply too long. Three 2-year terms (6 years) maximum per position would encourage more citizen interest in running for office and invigorate Richfield's government with fresh new ideas and restored ethics and integrity.