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Michael Cummings, Manitowoc Common Council President

The intent of this letter is to voice my interest in filling the position of Alderman for the Fourth District of the City of Manitowoc for the remainder of the current term. It seems a little odd to begin a letter of such import with an anecdote, but I think it is germane to my reasoning. I am, of course, the widow of the late Jim Brey. Our first date was in January 1997 – at a bar, in his district. We spent time getting signatures for nomination papers – his version of a date, I think – in his district. There is video of our oldest child pointing to a council meeting on TV and yelling “daddy.” I spent 27 years making jokes that Manitowoc was his real wife and I was just the mistress; that’s how important his district was to Jim.

We chose Manitowoc for a reason, not just because of Jim’s love for politics. We agreed that this is a wonderful place to raise a family, to work and build our lives, and to retire. To that end I am proud to be a teacher and the Chairman of the English Department at Lincoln High School. I have no intent of leaving the area and still feel that this is a place where I want to invest my time and give back to my neighbors and to all of the students and parents I have met in my daily life. My passion really is teaching and learning – perfect for a role that will require me to learn quickly to fill the role of “answer man” that Jim held.

There was real, bone-deep pride in the man I married about his service to the City of Manitowoc and his representation of the people of the fourth. This district is our home and its members, many of them, are our friends because of that. Like all married couples, we talked about the circumstances of our day and very often for us that meant local politics. I understand the issues and a lot of the intricacies of making decisions affecting my community.

I believe that one of Jim’s biggest regrets would be that he could not finish what he started for this term as the Fourth District Alderman. While I am no Jim Brey and really have no interest in long-term political involvement, I am willing and eager to change the ending of his life of service from what feels like a hyphen, to a period. I know he is laughing at me for this but I would like to end his term as “Alderman Brey” for my family that is the fourth district.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Jodi L Brey