

August 15, 2022

Citizens to Elect Bobbie Gross
2236 N. 21st Street
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Candidate Gross,

Restore the Balance is a 501(c)4 organization that educates the public about the danger political extremism poses to a healthy democracy. We urge citizens to learn about candidates running for public office and to support those who best put public interest first and work to bring citizens together.

To help citizens learn about candidates, we have created a questionnaire for you and your opponent running for Mesa County Clerk and Recorder..

We will share your responses, question by question, along with those of your opponent with our 2,300 members and supporters. We will also share them with various media outlets which we believe will help Mesa County citizens make the best decision about whom to support.

You will notice that we have also provided you with a set of seven political principles we believe should guide political conduct in Western Colorado. Please review them carefully. Some of our questions will be about these seven principles.

Please have your answers completed and sent to Restorethebalance@outlook.com by Tuesday, September 13 at 6PM. Please meet the deadline. We want voters to learn about your views. It would be a disservice for the public to see only your opponent's answers and not yours.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please send them to my attention at restorethebalance@outlook.com

Steven Mandell
Restore the Balance

Restore the Balance

Seven political principles to guide political conduct

We must do more than simply be against extremism. We must embrace an alternative set of political principles. We believe these seven principles should guide us.

- **We believe** that political parties should vigorously compete over values, principles, and ideas, but also find common ground to solve problems and pass needed legislation. Gridlock is not an option.
- **We believe** facts, supported by irrefutable evidence, are the basis for what to believe and how to act. No civilization can endure when its citizens believe there is no such thing as objective facts or truths.
- **We believe** that no one has a monopoly on the best public policy proposals. That means the ability to listen to and understand both sides of a debate are a prerequisite to finding practical solutions.
- **We believe** public interest must come before party interest. This means putting what is right ahead of loyalty to a party or an individual party leader.
- **We believe** that problem-solving is more important than fund-raising. Extremists line their pockets then use the funds to amplify division instead of producing solutions.
- **We believe** citizens should be free to run for office or volunteer to support the candidate of their choice without being threatened or harassed. Extremism uses intimidation because it cannot stand up to independent, open-minded thinking. Instead, it relies on the mentality of the mob.
- **We believe** it is time to expect citizens to embrace individual responsibility. Extremists always talk about “freedom,” but never mention the responsibility to the community that comes with it.

Candidate Questionnaire
Mesa County Clerk & Recorder
Bobbie Gross (R)

By now, you have read and considered the seven political principles we feel should guide political conduct in Western Colorado.

1. Do you endorse each of the seven principles Restore the Balance feels should guide political conduct in Western Colorado? If you endorse them all, please explain how you will work to execute these principles. If there are one or more principles you do not endorse, please identify them and explain why.

I do endorse all the principles. The office of the Clerk and Recorder is administrative in nature, meaning that the Clerk and Recorder does not make the rules and laws and must work within them. I will work from facts in my decision making and participate in legislative discussions to ensure the citizens of Mesa County are represented. I will share facts about how elections are conducted and the checks and balances in place to help combat voter fraud. Sharing information on the conduct of the Clerk's Office is key to bringing trust back. I will bring ideas to the table to help improve processes in elections and if there is an issue I will get to the bottom of it, not pass the buck and I will help resolve it.

2. What experience do you have that can give voters confidence that you are qualified to run the Clerk and Recorder's office? Be specific.

I worked in the Clerk's office beginning in 2007, I am currently at the Treasurer and Public Trustee's office. I started at the Clerk's office as a front-line clerk working my way up to the Motor Vehicle Manager and in 2016 I became the Co-director of Elections. I am familiar with all duties and requirements the Clerk is responsible for, those duties include Motor Vehicle, Recording, Elections, Clerk to the Board, Liquor, Marijuana, and Marriage Licensing. I have worked on legislative committees for motor vehicles and worked on several committees to help implement the new statewide motor vehicle software that was implemented in 2018. I worked with legislatures to change unnecessary laws that made it more difficult for citizens to register their classic cars. I completed the Grand Valley Leadership Course, the certification courses to become a Certified Election Professional in Colorado and I am nationally certified as an Elections Registrar and Administrator through Auburn University. It is important to me to maintain my credentials as an Elections Professional. One focus I will have in the Clerk's office is to reduce turnover. Under my previous leadership in the office, we maintained experienced staff by maintaining a less than 1% turnover rate. I strongly believe in supporting staff and provide them the support they need to be successful. While working in the Treasurer and Public Trustee's office I have learned how intertwined the

Clerk, the Assessor, and the Treasurer and Public Trustee's offices are. I believe we can work together to help citizens navigate one office instead of making multiple stops.

3. As Clerk and Recorder, you will oversee elections in Mesa County. Thinking only about Colorado, do you believe Colorado 2020 election results were legitimate? If you do not feel results were accurately reported, why do you feel that way and what factual evidence supports your belief?

I have not seen anything that would overturn the 2020 election results. I am a nationally certified elections administrator and during my education I networked with other election officials across the county. The election officials are dedicated to running fair, transparent, and accurate elections, most do not get involved in politics, they want elections to reflect the will of the people. When I ascertain the truth, I ask questions to the experts that are well versed and experienced in the matter. Ronald Reagan said, "Trust but verify."

4. What changes, if any, do you intend to make from your predecessor, Tina Peters, in policy or training?

My initial plan is to go into the office and observe, consulting the staff to see what is working well and what needs to improve. The staff has held the office together for months and I respect their input. I will continue to work toward a one stop county shop with other elected officials. This initiative is contained in Mesa County's Strategic Plan. One idea is to cross train Recording to be able to release deeds of trust for the Public Trustee. This will eliminate customers having to visit multiple offices. I will further streamline manufactured home transactions in the same manner by working closely with the Treasurer and Assessor. I will re-unite the team within the clerk's office so there is unity. I am committed to keeping the satellite Motor Vehicle offices open and staffed. I will be a leader that is present, engaged, supportive, and attentive to the staff and citizens of Mesa County.

5. What plans do you have to ensure that election workers will be safe and free from intimidation and threats?

I plan too always be present. I will communicate with citizens who express concerns. I have the experience to guide citizens through the process, showing them how an election is conducted. There are laws and procedures in place to reduce voter fraud and it takes a team of staff and election judges to ensure our elections are secure and accurate. We need to take threats to our team seriously. I would take action if there were threats or intimidation being waged against the team.

6. Can you provide some examples of how you worked with members of the opposing party in developing your ideas or policies as a candidate?

I might be optimistic in my approach, but I believe in having open and honest conversations with the citizens. I believe they are compassionate about their feelings and want to be heard, they want someone to listen to what their frustrations are. I have had several conversations with individuals of vastly opposing viewpoints and at the end of the discussion we may not have agreed but we found some mutual respect and common goals. At the end of the day, I believe we want some of the same things, we just might not agree on how to get there.

7. In Mesa County there are more registered unaffiliated voters than there are Republicans or Democrats. Do you support the idea of including independents in election campaign oversight? Why or why not?

I believe we should include unaffiliated voters in our elections. Currently the law states we must exhaust the caucus list from the parties before we can utilize unaffiliated judges. When this law was passed, we lost many dedicated election judges. I would like to have them back on the team.

8. Aside from election administration and oversight, what are the most important improvements needed in the Clerk and Recorder's office?

There are many important improvements we need in the Clerk's office.

I will reduce staff turnover by bringing trust back, the staff needs to be supported. We need to work as a team with the same goals in mind. The staff needs a safe space to bring new ideas to the table. Communication can always be improved upon. We can make improvements to the Motor Vehicle office by expanding services, so customers do not have to come into the office.

In Elections our staff currently hires a vendor to program our election and then we test it. I have experience building ballot content, I will provide our Elections team the support they need to do it in house again. This will help bring back additional trust and confidence for staff, election judges, and citizens.

I want to improve customer service by expanding staff knowledge in order to help the customer or direct them to the appropriate department. There are many times customers have come in, just to be told they are in the wrong location. I want to give citizens accurate information, so they are not visiting multiple offices just to be turned away.

I will be accountable if there is an error, I will find out how it happened and make improvements, so it does not occur in the future. The buck stops at me, as Clerk.