

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES FOR DELTA COUNTY COMMISSIONER

ELECTION: NOVEMBER 5, 2024

PRESENTED BY RESTORE THE BALANCE, DELTA COUNTY
a nonpartisan, nonprofit, organization

PLEASE RETURN YOUR RESPONSES TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE NOT LATER THAN 5:00 P.M.
ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2024 BY EMAIL TO: rtbdeltacounty@gmail.com

To: Candidates for Delta County Commissioner
Delta County, Colorado

1- What qualifications do you have that can give voters confidence that you should be elected to serve as a Delta County Commissioner? Please be specific.

30 years as a Mining Geologist supervising employees, contractors, and budgets. The work required coordination with local, state, and federal agencies with strict adherence to permit stipulations.

4 years as Town of Hotchkiss Trustee

8 years as Town of Hotchkiss Mayor

4 years as Delta County Commissioner

2- What personal values are the most important for public officials?

Character

Leadership

Respect

a. Please provide examples of activities you have been involved in that express those values.

Character: Recognized as 2017 Hotchkiss Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year. I have been honored to be recognized for character and integrity from many sources both personal and professional. These include Club 20, Gunnison Basin Roundtable, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Society of Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration (SME) as a Registered Member, American Institute of Professional Geologists (certified Professional Geologist), and most recently awarded the Dr. James A. Pendleton Award from the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety.

Leadership: I have completed multiple leadership courses over my career with the latest in 2021. Additionally, I have served as Chair and Vice-Chair of the BoCC, continue to serve on the Club 20 Executive Committee, founding member of JOLT, Chair of the Gunnison Basin Roundtable, Member of the Delta Health Foundation, and other organizations.

Respect: I have consistently and intentionally treated everyone with respect in my personal and public discourse. Serving the community of Hotchkiss first as a Trustee and on the Planning Commission before serving as Mayor provides a public record of respect going back 20 years. Additionally, as Commissioner, the Public Hearings on the Land Use Code are recent examples of listening to and respecting opinions that I may not agree with but need to hear.

3- Upon reading and considering the seven political principles we feel should guide political conduct in Western Colorado:

a. Do you endorse each of the seven principles Restore the Balance feels should guide political conduct in Western Colorado?

Yes. I hold myself responsible for my personal civility, respect, and civic responsibilities as both a citizen and a public official. I am on record saying good ideas come from all sides.

b. Please explain how you will work to execute these principles as a County Commissioner if you are elected.

I am already applying those principles in my daily work and hold co-workers and staff accountable to the same standards of respect and civility.

c. If there are any principles you do not endorse, please identify them and explain why.

4- It is important to let people know that you put the public interest first. In looking back over the past year or two, are there any decisions the Delta County Commissioners have made with which you do not agree?

No. County Commissioners are responsible for a wide scope of issues including budgets, Human Services, Public Health, Law Enforcement, infrastructure, and Land Use Planning to name a few. As a Commissioner that has been engaged in these issues and decisions I see how hard some of these decisions can be and how

much thought and time goes into understanding the issues before making the necessary decisions.

If yes, how would you change them?

5- In the aftermath of recent political events, some security experts cite increased risks to local governments from groups which pose a threat to the right to peacefully assemble and to the proper functioning of government.

a. As a County Commissioner, how would you expect to deal with threats of political violence including disruption of County Commissioner meetings?

1. Actively listen to concerns and issues presented.
2. Ask for and demonstrate civility and restraint.
3. Proceed with logical discussions with calmness.
4. If necessary, recess the meeting to allow emotions to subside.

b. What, if anything, should be done to protect elected officials and the public from those using harassment to stop civil engagement in the exercise of democratic processes?

1. Demonstrate personal responsibility.
2. We as citizens should have the courage to call out harassment and not accept it as a normal part of public life. The ability to attract and retain good people to elected and staff positions becomes harder and harder as uncivil and disrespectful behavior is more common.

6- Delta County uses mail-in ballots. Do you feel this method serves the public interest?

Yes. I have reviewed the Delta County election systems many times and watched how ballots are accounted for and securely processed. I have absolute confidence in the Delta County election process and staff.

7- Do you feel county government in the recent past has been moving in the correct direction?

Yes. Delta County administration works hard to live within their budgets despite the state's unfunded mandates. We endeavor to treat Delta County employees with respect and provide a living wage. While the Land Use Code was maligned and

misinterpreted, it provides certainty for property owners to invest in their dreams and is a common sense framework for future generations.

- a. What additional steps would you promote to maximize serving the interests of Delta County in an efficient and cost-effective manner?

Unfunded mandates from state and local statutes are becoming costlier, more time consuming, and never ending. Everyone, not just Commissioners, need to let their representatives understand what a burden it's become for us.

- 8- What do you feel are three important issues and/or concerns facing Delta County and what solutions do you have in mind?

Mental health, addiction, and the consequences of the issues around it. Delta County is absolutely trying to help the segment of our population that needs help through the assistance of the Human Services Department. Additionally, when individuals commit crimes, Delta County supports several programs including Pretrial Services which helps those get the resources to help them and ensure they be responsible to the community. If incarcerated, Delta County supports Jail Based Behavioral Services (JBBS) to help them get mental health assistance and get their lives on track. Additionally, Delta County helps support homeless housing and family support housing for those vulnerable to homelessness in our communities.

Housing affordability is not just a Delta County or Colorado problem. Inflationary pressures from post-pandemic migrations, supply chain shortages, and increasing energy costs all add to the costs of housing. I invest my time and expertise to JOLT, Joint Organizations Leading Transition, which advocates for an "All of The Above" energy policies and to help state and federal law makers understand the consequences of one-size fits all energy policies that drive all costs upwards. I do believe the certainty of the updated Land Use Code helps the logical development of housing in Delta County.

Economic opportunities are essential for communities to thrive. Delta County supports the economic development team at One Delta to attract and retain business. One Delta provides employee training classes as one way to provide skills to assist business in finding and retaining good employees. Delta County tried very hard, in the Land Use Code, to minimize interference in home based businesses while still protecting neighbors and neighborhoods.

Thanks for your help in encouraging public participation in our election process.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE BY 5:00 P.M. ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2024 TO:

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