

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES FOR MUNICIPAL ELECTED OFFICE

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 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024, BY EMAIL TO: rtbdeltacounty@gmail.com

**To: Candidates for Municipal Office
Town of Paonia, Colorado**

- 1- What qualifications do you have that can give voters confidence that you should be a member of the Paonia Board of Trustees? Please be specific.

I'm running unopposed to serve as Mayor of Paonia. I've been a town Trustee since December of 2021 and prior to that I attended nearly every Town Trustee meeting since early 2020 as a citizen. As a result, I'm familiar with how a small statutory Town can best be governed, understand town code, the adoption of ordinances, the Town budget, the role of the public and the importance of well-run Board of Trustee meetings. Over the past year, I've seen the governance in the Town improve by leaps and bounds and I would like to be able to help to continue this positive momentum.

- 2- By now, 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 feel should guide political conduct in Western Colorado?

Yes, I endorse all seven principles.

- b. If you endorse them all, please explain how you will work to execute these principles.

First, those of us running/serving in municipal government run as nonpartisan candidates. We do not include any party affiliation in our electioneering and are not beholden to any political party. In my time serving as a Trustee, my political affiliation has not been a part of any conversation or public proceeding.

As a current Trustee in Paonia, I took an oath of office that “I will faithfully support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution and laws of the State of Colorado and the laws of the Town of Paonia and I will faithfully perform the duties of the office of a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Town of Paonia to which I have been elected.” I spent my working career as a state employee with the State of Wyoming and I take public service very seriously. My experience has been that as an elected official, it’s imperative to respectfully consider the ideas and opinions of others when making decisions that affect the Town of Paonia and its’ citizens and ultimately, the decisions, policies, laws, and resolutions the Board of Trustees approve must be in the best interest of the citizens we serve.

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

N/A

- 3- 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 of the Paonia Board of Trustees has made that you do not agree with?

Having been a member of the Board of Trustees for the last two years, it would be inappropriate for me to publically question a decision made by a majority of the Board even if I was a minority vote.

If yes, how would you change them?

N/A

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

- a. How would you define “extremist” activity and do you view it as a threat to the proper function of municipal government?

Threats posted on numerous social media platforms aimed at public servants across the county and the attempted and successful physical attacks on individuals across the country is definitely

concerning. It could threaten the function of municipal government, but because our positions are nonpartisan it makes it less likely for a person to impose an “us” vs. “them” mentality.

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?

I certainly don't have an answer as an individual to that larger question, but I personally strive to treat all persons with respect and explain that a position I'm taking on an issue is based on trying to serve the best interests of the citizens of Paonia.

5- Our county allows the use of mail-in ballots. Do you feel this method serves the public interest?

Yes, I use the mail-in ballot option here in Delta County and believe it is an excellent way to serve the public interest.

6- Do you feel municipal government in your Delta County community in the recent past has been moving in the correct direction?

Yes, the Town of Paonia has made huge progress and is headed in the right direction.

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

Paonia's infrastructure has been in disrepair for many years to the point that millions of dollars of replacements and repairs are needed to continue providing water and sewer services. The Town has been identifying and applying for grants and loans to help offset the expense to the Town of Paonia utility users and my role as Mayor will be to continue supporting this on-going process in every way possible.

7- What do you feel are three important issues and/or concerns facing the municipality in which you are seeking elected office and what solutions do you have in mind?

Three important issues include water, sewer and road infrastructure all requiring millions of dollars in repairs, increasing housing stock (some of it affordable) and conducting governance in a transparent and consistent manner. Improving the infrastructure is a priority and I will do my best as Mayor to ensure staff and funding are available to keep this a priority. The Town recently contracted for the creation of a Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Action Plan tailored to our community. This document combined with our in-process updated Comprehensive Plan can serve as a roadmap to providing additional and more varied housing stock. Lastly, as Mayor I am committed to continuing to make the business of running the Town and the background associated with decisions made by the Board of Trustees open and easily available to the public. Staff and elected officials need to carry out the public's business in a manner that fosters trust by citizens in their local government.

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

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