

Derek Cid Responses

General Questions/ Prompts for All Candidates:

- Why are you running for office?

As a combat veteran with two Iraq tours and having worked for large metropolitan areas and rural law enforcement, I have a wide array of cultural competencies and years of practical and procedural experience dealing with complex issues that we are currently facing and will face in our growing county. I also strongly advocate for conservative republic values and understand the importance of guardianship over our constitutional rights. This is why I would like the honor of serving our community and believe that I am qualified to be your next Pottawatomie County Sheriff.

- What do you consider the biggest challenge of the position you are running for? What areas of county government need improvement and why?

The primary challenge involves updating current practices to achieve consistent excellence within our agency. This includes improved staff training and addressing the needs of the entire county. As Sheriff, I plan to work closely with smaller police agencies to combat crime and build stronger community partnerships. This is an opportunity to collaborate and improve county government for the benefit of all citizens.

- How long have you been a part of the Pottawatomie County community? To what extent have you been a part of local government in the county?

I have lived in St. Marys with my wife and three daughters for twelve years. Two of them were born here in Kansas. My largest involvement in local government has been the last six years as the St. Marys police chief. Being a mid-size community, I wear many hats with assisting city administration and the commission in researching and advising on complex public safety issues. I've also been a long-time friend and neighbor to the Kaw Valley Chamber and the Wamego Chamber. By Being a part of all these different arms of local idea-generating and decision-making, it's been an amazing environment of collaborating, forward-thinking decisions, and the desire to build a much more prosperous and safe community.

- Regarding your prospective position, what do you consider your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?

Due to the many hats I've worn throughout my career, I have a lot of knowledge and experience in different fields. I'm a veteran, large-city cop, and small-rural law enforcement officer. I have been a working leader in my current position, meaning I've been a decision-maker who has shouldered the organizing, planning, bridge-building, and consequences, good and bad. My weakness would be I'm very driven and passionate and take a great deal of pride in what I do, which work-life balance.

- It's no secret that Pottawatomie County has broad and diverse demographics and culture. Please describe how you intend to strike a balance and serve everyone in the county.

As a current policing leader, I've led one of the county's most diverse law enforcement agencies. I believe in upholding the public's trust and embodying the profession's values. I've mentored and supported my team members, including a female amputee who is now our police captain, marking a significant milestone for our county law enforcement team. I don't bring that up as some form of a diversity "win" but as a testament that I look past faults to find the excellence within any individual.

- What are your top priorities if you are elected?

For me, number one is guardianship over the constitutional rights of Pottawatomie County and its citizens, preserving law and order, and leading a sheriff's office that strives and embodies excellence and service to its community on a daily basis. I've said it multiple times in my campaign: we're blessed here in Pottawatomie County. However, I've seen and worked in areas where that is not the case. Pottawatomie County needs a principled sheriff who has a proven track record of defending the Constitution and promoting Second Amendment rights and is a current and working policing leader who is out in the public and has tackled hard issues and questions. A leader like that will continue to ensure the prosperity we are enjoying. I will be that leader for all of our communities and families.

Questions for County Sheriff and County Attorney Candidates:

- How would you describe your management style?

I don't necessarily have a management style. I have a leadership style. Managers manage equipment and schedules; leaders influence minds and hearts. They provide teams with vision and purpose. When you give a team vision and purpose, they will not only conquer any obstacle you place in front of them but also take enjoyment and pride in the work involved in that process. This is why you can train a manager, but you can't train authentic leadership. Leadership, to me, means complete sacrifice. You have to undertake a leadership role not because my office will have a better window or the pay will be great, it's because you have to truly love and care for your team and the community they serve.

- How can we hire the best? How do we attract great candidates?

I hire the best at my current agency because I hire people who genuinely care about the communities they serve. I attract them because they know the agency I run is trustworthy, they are respected, and I treat them like adults. They have their expectations of me that I own, and they know I will have my expectations of them. I believe agencies best serve their public when they're composed of their local community members and handle matters at the local level. Also I think that candidates for policing positions should have "grit." By having life experience, officers serving their local community are better able to connect and show genuine humanity to those in need and better build trust with the community.

- People often wind up in the criminal legal system because they are struggling with substance use disorders and mental health issues. Is it appropriate for prosecutors, police and the courts to play a role in helping people with substance use disorders and mental health issues access care?

We have certain systems in place within the criminal justice system to try and be helpful to those who may seek help or may have fallen into the system for the first time, such as special probationary conditions or vigilant diversion programs. I'd be very cautious with turning the criminal legal system into a mechanism in which we treat everyone as a victim of themselves. At some, we must hold people accountable for the choices they make and keep them from creating new substance use disorders. I have years of experience in which some substance abuse individuals turned their lives around by entering the traditional criminal legal system, some who will even go as far as saying it's saved their lives.

- Low-income people entering the legal system face barriers to getting out due to limited financial circumstances. Do you feel that high fines, fees, and financial assessments in the criminal and traffic court system have contributed to the “criminalization of poverty” where poor people face harsher outcomes for the same conduct as others due to their poverty? Why or why not?

I honestly don't subscribe to the rationale that somehow the criminal justice system victimizes low-income people because they are breaking the law, and we hold them accountable. If we make exceptions for low-income people, we'll begin to fall into the trap of East and West Coast metropolitan cities' legal systems, which find every personal fault (poverty, low education, etc.) as a reason for leniency. When you make the lawbreakers the victims, the real victims are those that the lawbreaker takes advantage of.

The concept is simple: you break the law and get roped into the criminal justice system, then it has consequences. When we start to compromise and be relaxed on crime, we start running into serious problems. I've seen the studies on bail reform, raising some of the elements of statutes such as theft, and there is nothing to back that they reduce recidivism. So, if someone is low-income and they're stealing from your business left and right, they should just be allowed to because they're low-income? No, that's now putting it back onto the victims, the hard-working average citizens.

- What is the number one crime-related issue that needs a plan of action and how will you address it?

I think it's popular now to talk about Fentanyl, and yes, it's very important and people are losing their lives, but we have many other issues happening in our rural communities that rural law enforcement is presently not equipped or not considering. Some include sex offender registration compliance checks; we have major issues with human trafficking along our rural roads by criminals who know how to avoid major highways like I70. These crime-related issues are vital for keeping our children safe but are often overlooked.