

John Tighe

Response to the list of candidate questions.

1. Have you ever managed any employees and if so how many?

With the Park County Sheriff's Office, as Corporal, there are times that I am the only supervision for the Patrol Division on staff for that particular shift; this could be 3-5 employees. As a Commissioner for Park County, the Board had different departments that were under our direct supervision. I had six Department Heads under my supervision. Each of these Department Heads had numerous employees under their supervision, which I was ultimately responsible for. As a previous business owner, I employed/supervised up to 10 employees.

2. What do you feel the minimum requirements are to be a Park County Deputy and what should be the base rate for that position?

Although there are different departments of the PCSO such as Jail Detention Deputies, Animal Control and Victim Advocates, the question posed was regarding Deputies so I am directing my response to the Patrol Deputy. State law requires that Deputies are POST Certified (Police Officer Standards and Training). This is accomplished through completion of a Police Academy. Deputies in Park County always pay for this training and certification out of pocket. Park County Sheriff's Office, PCSO, also has a requirement to complete an additional level of training. The Deputy is able to work on their own, under close supervision when this has been successfully completed. I believe this is an acceptable, minimal requirement. The base rate that Park County offers is well below that of our neighboring departments and needs to be raised to a level that is more competitive to attract and KEEP qualified individuals.

3. Should you seek higher salaries for Deputies how will you ensure that ANY tax increase goes toward training and making sure that Park County has qualified people in the positions?

I am glad this question was posted because it allows for some more detailed discussion. It would be wrong of me to state that as Sheriff, I could guarantee that any tax increase would go towards training and making sure that we were able to keep qualified individuals in our office. However, if there was a specific ballot question posed to the voters, (perhaps a quarter of a percent sales tax, for example), and that tax question was framed in such a way that a specific tax increase could only be applied to the training and salaries of deputies and command staff, the funding stream generated by that tax question would be guaranteed through time for only that use. Any Sheriff that happened to be elected would have to comply with the terms of the voter approved tax. I believe, after serving as Commissioner, that the county commissioners can commit to prioritizing funds from the county budget that could be applied to salary increases and retirement programs. The citizens of Park County deserve deputies who are

honest, who demonstrate integrity, intelligence and Initiative, and who show a commitment to serve and protect. The salary level of deputies, ongoing training and continuing education needs to be a higher priority for the Board of County Commissioners. Historically, this has not been the case. What the PCSO needs to have is an advocate who is always striving to make this a priority with the Board of County Commissioners and what I can guarantee is that I will be that advocate. When the State of Colorado sees fit to increase the salaries of the County Commissioners and other elected officials, including the Sheriff, I would challenge those same County Commissioners, who set the salaries of the Deputies to reflect a comparable percentage pay raise. Park County has been in a position of training Deputies only to have them leave to seek higher paying positions with other departments. We lose ground and money every time that happens.

4. What will you direct your deputies /employees to focus on and why? How do these issues affect citizens of Park County? [ALL]

As deputies we have an obligation to protect and serve while ensuring our own safety. There is a wide spectrum of duties that deputies carry out; patrolling, responding to emergencies, investigating complaints, criminal investigations, resolving disputes, arresting suspects, executing warrants, moving the occasional cow (horse, goats, wildlife etc.) off of roadways...and the list goes on. My focus would be that deputies show respect, compassion, and understanding while interacting with the citizens of Park County, knowing that each encounter will be a direct reflection of the Sheriff's Office. I would require honesty and accountability from the deputies; a demonstration of good judgement.

Our Detective Unit needs to have a higher level of specialized training. The outcome of a major crime is dependent on the ability of the detective to gather information and evidence and to perform this duty as prescribed by law to avoid tainting the process. As Sheriff, it would be my responsibility to ensure that deputies and detectives, while performing their duties, conduct themselves in a professional manner that elicits trust from the community, thereby helping to strengthen and rebuild the relationship between the community and the PCSO. Most importantly, there would be ongoing training and evaluations to make sure that each deputy and detective, in carrying out their duties, is prepared. This is imperative for the safety of the citizens of Park County and the deputies/detectives as they carry out their duty to protect and serve.

5. Do you support the AG's position on attempting to enforce federal law on Marijuana? Will you allow your deputies to assist Federal law enforcement in simple possession/ manufacture cases? [Sheriff]

I believe in local control from the Sheriff's Office and the other elected offices in Park County. With this being said, the citizens of Colorado legalized the recreational use of marijuana as well as medical use. Citizens of Park County voted to allow the manufacturing and selling of marijuana within the boundaries of Park County. As far as the federal government stepping in, they are outside of their jurisdiction to interfere with *state or county* responsibility for enforcing state laws. I will uphold these laws for the citizens of the county. At this point, I would not assist

the Federal law enforcement in simple possession/manufacturing cases. However, our Commissioners need to address the problem of large manufacturing/grow operations that are within residential areas that can be dangerous to the neighboring residents.

6. How do you plan to balance the wants and needs of the rural vs suburban residents? There is a perception that Park County is becoming Denver lite. Do you agree with the code of the west if so why if not then why [ALL]

Whether one chooses to live in a city, suburb, or a rural area, people are ultimately responsible for their own decisions. Moving from a city to a mountainous area requires an understanding of the area into which one is moving. For example, the type of motor vehicle and the skill to operate it that is adequate in the city may not be adequate in the mountains where snow depths are higher. Unfortunately, there are those who learn this only after they have either been snowed in to their driveway, or worse, caused an accident. So, while it might seem unfair, people who understand rural living and prepare for it are not going to be needing assistance and will not be burdensome. Those that find themselves needing assistance because of their lack of understanding of the area are the ones who will be calling for it. It is not the sheriff's, nor any other county employee's responsibility to think for someone else who neglects to educate themselves by any other means than experience. Providing information about the area when called upon to do so is always a duty. Perhaps creating a letter or brochure for real estate agents to hand out might be useful... assuming the real estate agents will hand it out.

As Sheriff, it is my duty to protect and serve each resident and ensure the protection of their constitutional rights. I do believe in the Code of the West; be a man of your word, take pride in what you do, stand up for what's right, keep your integrity intact; attributes like these and other standards in the Code of the West should be ingrained in all of us.

7. What is your position on Civil Asset Forfeiture [ALL]

There is a perception, by some, that Civil Asset Forfeiture is used as a 'Carte Blanc' for agencies to take what they want. Some see agencies "go for the money" instead of addressing a crime that has occurred or worse, using its ability to seize an individual's property or funds to further its own agenda. The taking of someone's property without due process is wrong. If property is taken, even before the person charged with a crime has seen their court date, due process has not been served. I want to stop the ability of those using illegally gained monies to further the criminal acts. However, we can't allow government to use it for its own benefit. This cannot be viewed as a 'funding source', it needs to be limited and have its own checks and balances.

8. What is your position on eminent domain [ALL]

Eminent domain's use by government has been, and continues to be, used to take land from private individuals for the furtherance of the majority of citizens. Where does the reach of government stop taking individual's property? It is our right to own private property without it being taken from us by government. I sat as a commissioner, making land use decisions and I

overwhelmingly was for a private property owner's right to keep and use his/her land for its intended purpose.

9. What procedures will you implement to provide transparency in your departments activities above and beyond the open records laws [ALL]

Transparency starts at the top. There has to be a balance of what information, at first, is given out to the public while making sure a crime can be and will be investigated for the victim(s). What I have seen in the past for the Sheriff's Office ranges from there being numerous sources of dissemination of information by the administration or none at all. The department needs one source, under the direction of the sheriff, to allow for the dissemination of information. If it is a major crime or natural disaster, the public is dependent on the Sheriff's Office and its ability to assess the event and release information ensuring the safety of the public while keeping the integrity of any investigation intact.

The county commissioner has access to the county attorney at all times. I believe the Sheriff's Office also has this same access and it should be utilized to make sure that information released to the public is done so in a timely and appropriate manner. I approach all cases knowing that the public will have a right to know what was investigated.

10. Will you consider a run as an independent should you not be the caucus winner [ALL]

No, I would not run as an Independent. I have decided to forego the republican caucus and assembly and petition to get on the ballot on the republican ticket. The position of Sheriff is one of trust from the people and should not be obligated to any organization such as the Republican Central Committee. I am republican, as are my core values. As Sheriff, I am committed to all citizens of this county. I have also decided not to take donations to fund my campaign so that again, I am obligated only to the citizens of Park County

11. What will you do to streamline and optimize the budget of your department, what wasteful practices do you want to eliminate [ALL]

Is the Sheriff's Office able to bring in inmates from other counties around the state to help augment the cost of the jail? This seems to be a question that Commissioners and the Sheriff continue to ask each other. Has there been a number study that shows the cost effectiveness of the jail? It needs to show past, present, and future costs and how these costs can be augmented by housing other county and state inmates.

I believe our biggest wastes are the resources that we put into the hiring and training of deputies, only to have them leave to go to other, higher paying departments. The Sheriff's Office has a high turnover rate. When it is running 'short staffed', there is a higher than normal amount of overtime worked by deputies. The overtime budget needs to decrease and in order to do that; this department needs to be fully staffed. The Commissioners and other electeds need to understand that there will be incidents, out of the Sheriff's Office control, that will cost

the county. The Sheriff's Office is not like other elected offices that can plan for all future costs. My experience in the Sheriff's Office, coupled with my experience as a county commissioner gives me a unique understanding of the budget process and that particular relationship.

12. What personal and or economic relations do you have to current elected county officials [ALL]

I do not have any economic relationships with any electeds. I have had a professional work relationship with some of the electeds when I was serving as commissioner. If elected for Sheriff, my only obligation will be to the citizens of Park County.

14. What would you do different in regards to the most recent tragedy involving Miss. Long? Things leading up to, during and after this investigation.

First I want to express my deepest sympathies to the Long family for the tragic loss of their child. Maggie Long will always have a lasting impression on the lives of those she knew and loved. As this is an ongoing investigation, I cannot comment on any part of the investigation and I will be very general with my answer to this question.

Communication with the community is vital even if information cannot be disseminated. Again, this is why it is so important to strive for a relationship of trust with the community. I believe, with trust, the community will understand what might be detrimental and damaging to any investigation. When there is a sense of secrecy or 'hidden agendas', it creates a very real distrust and makes a difficult situation even harder for all parties.

15. What will you do to insure that an armed Resource Officer is ALWAYS present during school hours at the Fitzsimmons Middle School and High School?

What are our priorities? A Deputy in our schools should be at the top of the list. I started the School Resource Officer program at Platte Canyon High School and I believe it comes down to the priorities of the Sheriff's Office. We have a lack of deputies at this time and, as a result, the S.R.O. has been pulled out of the schools to make up for it. If elected, my priority is to have the S.R.O. in our school districts. The Platte Canyon School district states, as part of their mission statement, that they will have safe schools for our students. The practice of pulling the S.R.O. out of the schools should stop. It appears to me that the Sheriff's Office has taken a step back from keeping our children safe. The Commissioners, along with the Sheriff's Office, need to choose their priorities. One should be the safety of our children and as Sheriff; I would put that priority back at the top.

16. What will you do to decrease the illegal drugs coming into our county and the ability for our kids to obtain illegal drugs?

I believe our best defense against drugs is education. Educating our kids, the school's staff and the community by utilizing programs that are designed to discourage and prevent the use of

drugs. Since I have been with the Park County Sheriff's Office, it appears that we have moved away from the proactive education to stay away from drugs although the school itself has put on small classes about how drugs can be harmful to our bodies and mind. Two years ago the attorney general's office helped by sponsoring educational classes that really engaged the students with trained law enforcement in the schools. Again, we have to turn to having S.R.O.s in the schools. Platte Canyon School district was chosen as one of the first school districts to have this program. This agency needs to continue this education. If we don't have the funds for it, we need to look to other funding sources. One of the reasons I stayed with this office was how Sheriff Wegener approached it and how he looked to better it. He went out and received a grant from the federal government to start a S.R.O. program at Platte Canyon High School. This was funding from the 100,000 points of Light that was championed by President Bill Clinton. This is the type of thinking we need to get back to. I believe we need to start with education first.

17. What will you do about the fact that some of our current Deputies have been involved in activities in the past that have gotten them relieved of their positions then rehired at a later date? Activities that are illegal and violate the sworn oath they have taken.

I am not aware of current deputies that have been involved in activities that resulted in their termination only to be rehired. Any law enforcement officer who had been found guilty of illegal activity, through due process, would not be a candidate for Park County Sheriff Deputy under my administration. I want only deputies that are committed to and take their job seriously. For example, I do not want a deputy that has sworn, under oath, to tell the truth then proceed to lie to the court. The legislature has made steps to help law enforcement agencies become aware of deputies/officers who have done this by making them disclose to the law enforcement agency that they have been deceptive in court. A good question for our sheriff candidates would be "what would you have to disclose, under this legislation, to the office of Sheriff?" As in HOUSE BILL 16-1262, I would not have to disclose that I have ever lied in a court of law.

18. What makes your promises or answers more believable than another candidates?

My integrity is intact and I stand by that. I believe that honesty & integrity are vital in how you live your life both personally & professionally and I guard that. Communities need to be able to trust their law enforcement agencies; that is why I put so much emphasis on rebuilding & strengthening that relationship here in Park County. Add to that my experience in the Sheriff's Office, coupled with my experience as a county commissioner gives me a unique understanding of the budget process and that particular relationship.

19. Why should we believe that you will truly do what you say you will do and that your answers aren't just campaign promises said to merely get elected?

Again, I am a man of my word & I stand before the citizens of Park County asking them to look at my track record in this community, my track record with the Sheriff's Office & my track record as an elected (Commissioner). My desire is to serve Park County. I am a Republican and I have chosen to petition on for Republican because I want to be put on that ballot by going to the people of Park County. I am not taking any campaign contributions; this will be my own personal expense. I will say it again; the office of Sheriff is one of extreme trust. I want the people of Park County to know that they and only they are who I am indebted and obligated to.

20. Do you have kids currently enrolled in the Park County school system?

My daughter and two sons all graduated from Platte Canyon High School so no, I do not currently have kids enrolled in the school. I am very proud of them and proud that they graduated from Platte Canyon School District. I am still as committed to the school district in Park County for the safety of our students as when my own children attended them. I do not agree with the fact that we, as a Sheriff's Office, have pulled away from the security of our schools. The heart of our community is our children and the safety of our schools should reflect that.

21. Would you support or not support teachers in the Platt Canyon school system being trained and authorized to maintain a firearm in select classrooms?

Yes I would support our teachers being armed in our schools, IF they are trained and authorized to carry. We know that most school shootings only last 3-4 minutes and if confronted the shooter will sometimes kill themselves. The tragedy at Platte Canyon High was different than most school shootings (barricaded suspect). If we have the ability to respond quickly, this can save lives. The Sheriff's Office would need to work in conjunction with the school district and the S.R.O. Other law enforcement officers would need to know who is carrying. The record keeping and documentation would have to be meticulous.

22. As an Accreditation & Policy Compliance Manager in a neighboring jurisdiction, I am wondering why the PCSO has not decided to pursue law enforcement accreditation? I believe many of the issues the PCSO has faced/is currently facing are covered by LE standards, and these programs would immensely help bring this agency back on track. Can the candidates speak as to their thoughts on pursuing this recognition?

What a great question! I have worked in another agency that was working towards the accreditation of its department. This requires that the department review all of its policies and

procedures and it also elicits all of its deputies/officers to work on it. This improves administration and the people that work for it. It also asks for community input. I believe I have heard our administration talking about it but it has not come to fruition. If elected Sheriff, I would pursue law enforcement accreditation as I believe it would not only be of great benefit to our department but also one more way of working towards building trust and accountability with the community we serve.

23. Will you publish your agencies policy and procedure manual including use of force continuum and code of conduct publicly?

Absolutely. Providing this information to the public can assist them in knowing why a deputy might have taken the actions they did or asked the questions that they did. Actions taken by a deputy are sometimes scrutinized for having a 'hidden agenda, being an attempt to cover up something or simply 'they have a beef with me'. To see something in print helps those to see that there are procedures and policies that they must follow for given situations. It also gives the community an understanding why deputies use force in situations in order to protect individuals and to keep the peace. I believe that the Victim's Bill of Rights should also be published along with the department's policy and procedure manual. This movement for victim's rights started with President Ronald Regan. One of the Sheriff's Office most effective departments has been its Victims Advocates and it needs to be continually supported by the Sheriff's Office through this change in leadership. This question and #22 are great examples showing that this community desires to have a better understanding of how the Sheriff's Office operates and I also believe it gives more accountability of our department to the community it serves.

24. What do you think are the appropriate circumstances and criteria before implementing "no-knock" raids on private property? When is such risk of life to the deputies and victims worth it?

This is an interesting question and I will start with a cop story. I was a Detective on a Special Details Unit for Bellevue, Washington. This unit's main job was responding to gang related calls and gang intervention. At times, this unit would be put on loan to the Narcotic Unit when they were short bodies; usually for serving search warrants. This warrant stands out for me because I was first through the door. When I entered, my duty was to take down the bad guy. This warrant was a 'knock and announces' one with a time period allowed for the resident to answer the door before law enforcement could enter, as stated in law. However, unknown to us, the bad guy had drawn his weapon and was ready and waiting for our entry. Upon entry, I found that the informant had tried to take the gun from the bad guy and they were fighting



over it. This fight saved me from possibly being shot. In 33 years on the job, I have never served a no-knock warrant.

So when should a no-knock warrant be used?

I believe that citizens of the United States of America should have a right not to have unreasonable searches and seizures as stated in the fourth amendment. A no-knock warrant should only be used in extreme circumstances when there is a risk of danger to the officer/deputy. The state of Colorado also states that a District Attorney must sign this warrant. The final review of the warrant is by the judge and he/she must see facts supporting the risk of danger to the deputy/officer.

25. Do you support individuals being able to own guns? If not, why and if so, why?

I believe that the second amendment gives citizens the right to own and bear firearms.

26. Do you support the federal government removing marijuana from a schedule 1 drug?

The people of Colorado have voted to allow our citizens who need marijuana, for medicinal purposes, to have access to it as a tool to help them with their medical needs. As a schedule one drug, federal law description states "the use of marijuana has no medical purpose". I believe that it does and therefore should be moved to another location in the Scheduled drugs.

27. Have you ever disobeyed an order from a superior and if so, why

I have never disobeyed a lawful order from a supervisor.

28. If there are no funds available from the county or taxpayers, what can and will you do to augment the training and equipment for deputies?

I hope and pray that we do not come to a point where the tax payer does not fund our law enforcement. I have been in the position of having to supply all of my own safety equipment needed to perform my job. I believe most deputies/officers are dedicated to the job of serving the citizens where they work and they are more than willing to do this. Some have paid for their own academy training so that they are able to choose where they work. I have done that because I wanted to work in Park County Colorado. With that being said, the Sheriff can look to other larger agencies that will help with training. These same agencies also have hand me down equipment that can be used by our agency. The Sheriff's Office can also ask for grants on the state and federal level. However, it is necessary to pay close attention to all criteria for these grants as some of them come with obligations that may not be in the best interest for the Sheriff's Office.

29. If elected, how will you avoid conflict of interest, favoritism and the perception of deep corruption that currently seems to be so prevalent?

I believe way to avoid conflict of interest, favoritism and the perception of corruption is to be an open book, to be dedicated and committed to the people in your administration and in the community. A person's honesty, integrity and the way they live their daily lives are things that are ingrained in each of us, it is who we are and I believe this starts way before being elected. People make mistakes, we are all human. It is how you handle that mistake that speaks volumes as to the kind of character you have. Do you step up and take your share of responsibility or do you finger point and come up with excuses as to why you were not to blame? How do you handle successes? Being boastful and full of arrogance or humility? I believe in being transparent and having honest and open communication with the people who are under your administration and for the people in the community. I have always had an open door policy; serving as a law enforcement officer, SRO and as commissioner.

30. How would you have handled the Martin Wirth eviction differently? Please provide detail.

Before answering this question I want to express my deepest sympathy to the family of Nate Carrigan for their loss. Nate Carrigan was a true brother in blue.

Law enforcement has changed a great deal since my start in 1984. At the Los Angeles police academy my first training with a potential barricaded suspect was to secure the area and hold in place. The exercise was in an area referred to as Hogan's alley. As my classmate rushed the barricaded suspect the instructor eliminated them from the exercise. My instructor emphasized that the law enforcement tactic used would be hold in place. As explained by my instructors do not use the "John Wayne" tactic of being a hero if it is not needed in the incident. That was in 1984. The more common protocol now for an active shooter is for the officer to confront the shooter to stop the assault. This is done to save lives.

The responding deputies have to asses the incident as quickly as possible to put in place the appropriate response needed. Training is of the utmost importance not only for the responding deputies/officers but for the whole chain of command.