
RE: Hunter McKinley Sydnor | Poncha Springs Candidate Questionnaire Responses

1. In a few sentences, please briefly share why you're motivated to run for public office, and why you believe you're qualified to serve in this context. (your response will be printed on the in-person Forum Program).
 - I believe my experience in Colorado as a communications manager for a large construction firm where I held public meetings to explained construction impacts and need for new roads as well as my work with an economic development organization in the Denver Tech Center has provided me great training, skills, ability to be an active listener, and to put plans into action. I've always been interested in public service and would like to be able to be of service to Poncha Springs.

I am running for the Poncha Springs Trustee position because Poncha Springs is growing. We are at a crossroads. To help manage our growth over the next few years, we need to articulate a vision for our town and develop processes and actions to achieve that vision.

2. I support changing codes and processes towards increased use of Administrative decisions by public sector staff, while focusing public input on changes to the code itself.
 - Strongly Agree
3. Development approval times are:
 - About right
4. As you are likely aware, the Chaffee County 2020 Comp Plan stated, "keep the country country and the towns towns". What does this statement mean to you and how would you use this guiding principle in setting land use policy?
 - Poncha Springs is separated from the other towns in the area by stretches of rural space. This helps each town to have its own identity and provides space for the "country." Poncha Springs needs to update their land use policies and utilize or at least consider this concept.

5. The Town's government is sufficiently connected to, and collaborative with, the school district.
 - Somewhat Agree
6. How can the Town's government encourage/support/facilitate increasing work-based learning programs for local youth?
 - This is a great economic development win-win. Finding ways to engage students in work-based learning would be a very positive thing for our town and our students. I have written workforce development plans for small communities in the past and can help develop at plan for Poncha Springs. There are many workforce development grants that the town could investigate to help facilitate work-based learning within the town government and within the businesses in Poncha Springs. Poncha Springs should be a town where our students want to return to after higher/additional education, or to settle down once they graduate from high school.
7. Passing a local ordinance requiring the installation of broadband infrastructure as a part of all new development is a must.
 - Strongly Agree
8. Internet infrastructure should be treated as equally important to other utilities (water, sewer, gas, electricity) in infrastructure projects.
 - Strongly Agree
9. What is local government's role in increasing broadband availability and reliability for the community?
 - The State of Colorado has had a focus on bringing broadband to rural areas for several years. Chaffee and Saguage counties just received a \$12 M grant in Jan 2024 to help households and businesses to have "decent service," currently defined by 100 mbps. Poncha Springs already has four providers in town and three of the four provide 100 mbps or greater. Local governments have a role monitoring providers to ensure that service is maintained and improves with technology. The town can continue to apply for grants that support this mission.
10. [BV/Poncha] has enough water to meet municipal, housing, and commercial development growth.
 - Strongly Agree
11. In the face of inadequate current water supply Town should...

- Pursue additional municipal water sources to support future development
12. What is the most important next step for Town in regards to water or wastewater?
- The Town of Poncha Springs cannot move forward with any development until the wastewater lawsuit with the City of Salida is resolved. One way or the other, more wastewater capacity is needed. The town needs to work with Salida to find funding sources that can pay for the additional capacity needs.
13. Producing housing that is accessible to our local workforce requires public subsidy in amounts that directly affect affordability levels.
- Somewhat Disagree
14. Density is directly linked to affordability (i.e. increased density lowers the cost of each housing unit).
- Strongly Agree
15. Encouraging housing development, including market rate housing, is helpful to the overall health of the housing market and to the community.
- Strongly Agree
16. Housing policy is a local government responsibility.
- Somewhat Agree
17. What specific policy would you change or advocate for that would have a tangible impact on workforce housing if elected?
- Poncha Springs has not updated their comprehensive plan since 2011. The town has changed greatly since then and having an updated plan is critical. A plan will identify places for commercial growth, residential growth and park space. The plan will consider what Poncha Springs has today and what the expected growth will be. Once that is accomplished, then we can develop policies to support smart growth, which includes development plans that consider housing stock needs, water, wastewater, transportation, broadband, and other infrastructure."
18. New rules & regulations for environmental sustainability should be weighed against, and modified for, their impact on the health of local businesses.
- Strongly Agree

19. Environmental sustainability is inextricably linked with innovation and technology.

- Somewhat Agree

20. The single most important action [BV/Poncha] can take in 2024 to advance environmental sustainability is...

- Providing suggestions to citizens on ways to establish routines and habits into everyday activities will help advance and support environmental sustainability. For example, it could be a story in the newsletter or other town communication tools on how to incorporate recycling, reduce water usage, and use products with less packaging.

21. "Closing question: What question have we not asked that you'd like to share (and answer?)"

- Question: What is the single most important thing Poncha Springs can do right away to improve resident's lives?
- Answer: I cannot stress enough that Poncha Springs needs to improve their communication processes. We must have an updated website with current information. We need to have a social media presence for topical and timely information. The Trustees have voted to update the website which is a great start, but there should be processes to keep the website updated all of the time. If citizens can easily find information and are communicated with regularly, they feel included and part of the town. It doesn't really take a lot of money or time to have a variety of communication tools that fit everyone's needs