



Arts, entertainment, bluster and some news

Reader

April 18, 2024 | FREE | Vol. 21, Issue 16

**Candidate
Questionnaire
in this edition**

Happy Earth Day

ELECTION



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

2024 PRIMARY ELECTION

Races for Bonner County commissioner Dist. 1 and Dist. 3 and Bonner County sheriff
Compiled by Zach Hagadone and Soncirey Mitchell

Publisher's note: Before each election, the Sandpoint Reader reaches out to candidates in contested races to ask questions about how they would represent the constituents in the offices they seek. Below are questions and answers for the offices of District 1 and District 3 Bonner County commissioner, as well as Bonner County sheriff in the Tuesday, May 21 primary election. Next week's edition will feature candidates running in contested Idaho legislative races.

All candidates who responded to our questions have been included below, with some answers edited lightly for length.

There are two candidates forums coming up: the first featuring Bonner County candidates on Monday, April 29 hosted by the Bonner County Daily Bee and Selkirk Association of Realtors; the other featuring Idaho Legislative District 1 candidates on Tuesday, April 30 and hosted by KRFY 88.5FM, SandpointOnline.com and the Sandpoint Reader.

Both forums will be held at the Sandpoint High School auditorium and will begin at 5:30 p.m. and conclude no later than 8 p.m.

Finally, don't forget to vote Tuesday, May 21.

Bonner County Commissioner

1. Why are you running for Bonner County commissioner?
2. What do you think are the three most important issues to your constituents?
3. What do you see as the top challenge facing your district — or the county in general — and how do you propose to address it?
4. Given the amount of lawsuits the county has faced in recent years, how would you use your position to protect against future litigation? What next steps would you propose to ensure that the county gets and maintains proper insurance?
5. The political climate surrounding the board of county commissioners has become notoriously divisive under the current BOCC. How would you diagnose the reasons for that division and how would you ease the tensions on the board?

District 1

James Burroughs, R



Age: 58

Birthplace and residence:
DID NOT RESPOND

How many years lived in
Bonner County: DID NOT
RESPOND

Past/current government
service (if applicable): Retired
correctional peace officer
director

Profession: Food service
director

Education: Two associates
degrees

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website

ANSWERS TO QUES-
TIONS DID NOT MATCH
QUESTIONNAIRE.

Brian Domke, R



Age: 49

Birthplace and residence:
born in New Jersey, Bonner
County resident

How many years lived in Bon-
ner County: 10

Past/current government
service (if applicable): chairman
of the Planning and Zon-

ing Sub-Area Committee for
Priest River/Oldtown (2019-
2021), member of the Bonner
County Natural Resource
Committee (2017-2019)

Profession: Landscape architect
Education: B.S., Cornell
University; A.A.S., Morrisville
State College

Contact info: info@Domke-
4BonnerCounty.com, (208)
610-9853, Domke4Bonner-
County.com

1. I am running for this
office to bring decorum and
effectiveness back to the board
of county commissioners. The
current dysfunction within the
BOCC has created an envi-
ronment that is inefficient,
creating unnecessary liability, a
work environment that nega-
tively impacts the retention/
recruitment of county staff,
and has resulted in an adver-
sarial relationship between the
BOCC and the public. It is my
intent to reverse these negative
impacts so that our county can

rebuild a healthy relationship
with the public, retain and
attract talented county staff,
reduce its legal liability, and
use tax dollars in an effective
and efficient manner.

2. I believe the citizens of
our county desire to have a
board of county commission-
ers that:

a. works together effectively
by focusing on making well-vet-
ted decisions that include
listening to the voice of the
public, instead of being distract-
ed by personality conflicts;

b. actively seeks to keep
the size and cost of county
government limited to reduce
our tax burden;

c. protects private property
rights, our natural resourc-
es and our community as a
whole, which are threatened
by poorly planned growth and
unlawful land use decisions.

3. The top challenge fac-
ing our county is the rapid

growth that has overburdened
our infrastructure, driven up
property/housing costs and un-
dermined the fabric of our rural
character. Solving this challenge
requires improving the county's
Comprehensive Plan to better
assess and define which areas of
the county can support stable
growth without overtaxing the
capacity of the land or harming
the adjacent neighbors, revamp-
ing county land use regulations
to provide clear and concise
permitting requirements, and
defining impact fees so that the
burden of cost for new devel-
opment falls on those benefit-
ing from the project, not the
current residents.

4. I would protect the
county from future litiga-
tion by only voting in favor
of board decisions that are
openly deliberated and lawful
to the best of my knowledge.
Such lawful decisions would
include respecting the con-

< Q&A, con't from Page 14 >

stitutionally protected rights of the public, complying with the Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations, and working to maintain a professional working relationship with all other elected county officers. Treating each citizen equally under the law can significantly reduce the county's future liability. Once the county has reduced its level of risk, obtaining property insurance will become more competitive and affordable.

5. The current BOCC dysfunction appears to stem from personality conflicts among the board. The BOCC should be focused on addressing issues, instead of attacking people. I would help restore professional conduct through leading by example. This would include treating others with respect and staying focused on each issue, not the personalities associated with it. To this end, I would second the motion of each of the other board members so that the idea can be heard and its merit can be vigorously debated before being voted on — allowing the idea to win or lose, not the person presenting the idea.

Brian Riley, R



Age: 50

Birthplace and residence: Born in Laguna Beach, Calif., and currently resides in Sagle

How many years lived in Bonner County: 39 years, since April 1985

Past/current government service (if applicable): N/A

Profession: Semi-retired business manager

Education: Three years of secondary education and over 20 years of practical management experience

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1. I feel that I have the qualifications and experience to perform the roles and duties of a county commissioner as outlined by the Idaho Association of Counties. I also feel that our culture and sense of community is important to the residents of Bonner County as it is with me — our family's roots go back several generations in Bonner County.

2. a. Property taxes affect everyone and are all impacted by tax rates.

b. Property rights are a focus within our communities due to several factors, including the Comp Plan being outdated. There have been several individuals in our community who have volunteered large amounts of time to get this completed and by the time of January inaugurations, the new BOCC is expected to have this as a tool.

c. Infrastructure improvements (or lack thereof) will have many impacts to our communities. The challenges of employee retention and recruiting are an issue in the departments providing many of our infrastructure services.

3. There will be several challenges but one that will impact the largest percentage of our county is maintaining the needed employee base to carry out the services expected to be provided by Bonner County. The ability to retain and attract qualified employees for the open positions within the county affect services and drain available budgets due to training and hiring costs.

4. Consistently follow our laws and ordinances when making decisions. If a potential "loophole" exists, make an agenda item to review the appropriate policy. Working with the risk manager and requesting annual audits is not out of the realm of expectations for validating the correct insurance is being selected both for cost and coverage.

5. Understanding that conflicting interpretations or thoughts on an issue are not to be discouraged. Many times I have learned that there were perceptions surrounding an issue that I had not considered that did in fact change my decision. Allow for discussion and input on issues before finalizing a decision but keep the discussion centered on the topic. Experience in having had to do this is very helpful in these circumstances.

District 3

Dimitry Borisov, R



Age: 45

Birthplace and residence: Soviet Union, residing in Clark Fork, Idaho

Years lived in Bonner County: 23
Past/current government service (if applicable): N/A

Profession: self-employed

Education: some college

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1. I'm running for Bonner County commissioner to ensure transparency, accountability, responsible governance, and responsible land use practices and planning. With my background in community service and dedication to listening to residents' concerns, I aim to represent their interests effectively and advocate for positive change.

2. Restoring trust in the commissioners' office. The lack of fiscal accountability to the taxpayer for the county funds at the fair. The sudden and unmeted housing boom with no street plan to mitigate traffic safety and practical use. Addressing responsible land use practices and planning.

3. The primary challenge is restoring trust, accountability and integrity in the commissioners' office. I will advocate for increased transparency, regular public engagement and a commitment to ethical governance. By actively involving residents in decision-making processes and prioritizing open communication, we can rebuild confidence in our local government.

4. I would prioritize proactive measures to minimize legal risks: closely working with legal counsel, seeking their guidance on potential liabilities; thoroughly assessing all available information before making decisions, while also working with risk management; regularly reviewing county policies and procedures to identify areas for improvement. By being transparent, accountable and having responsible governance practices, we can mitigate the possibilities of future litigation.

5. I believe the division stems from differing priorities and communication breakdowns, such as the unwillingness to listen to different opinions. To ease tensions, I'd prioritize open dialogue, build a culture of respect and collaboration, and focus on common goals for the betterment of Bonner County.

Jeff L. Glass, R WITHDREW FROM RACE

RON KORN, R DID NOT RESPOND

Luke Omodt, R (incumbent)



Age: 46

Birthplace and residence: Missoula, Mont.; Sandpoint, Idaho

Years lived in Bonner County: 45

Past/current government service (if applicable): 23 years United States Army SFC (ret.), 12 years as a government teacher at BFHS/SHS/CFHS and Middle School, current county commissioner

Profession: soldier/teacher/commissioner

Education: B.A., secondary education social studies with a minor in government; U.S. Army NCOES: WLC, BLC, ALC, SLC, Equal Opportunity leader, Master Resilience trainer

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1. Bonner County is a great place to live. I grew up here, left for the U.S. Army to realize how great home was, married a girl from my high school class and live across the street from my grandmother's house. County commissioners run a public utility company responsible for safe roads and bridges; weeds, airports, EMS and the Sheriff's Office; solid waste and more. These statutorily obligated services are paid through property taxes. Bonner County deserves efficient, prudent and competent leadership. I have the experience, commitment and temperament to protect and improve our quality of life. Vote Luke Omodt.

2. The three most important issues are the health, safety and welfare of Bonner County. County government is created by the law to provide services to the residents of Bonner County. Voters should demand competent, civil and responsible leadership that protects the ability of individuals to live their lives as they see fit. County residents should feel secure in their homes, finances and their opportunities. Parents need to know their kids are safe and they work in a county that is fiscally responsible. Reliable, efficient and prudent use of taxpayer monies is the recipe for the success of

< see Q&A, page 16 >

< Q&A, con't from Page 15 >

Luke Omodt answers continued:

local government.

3. The biggest challenge facing District 3 and Bonner County is addressing a growing county with an exodus of labor due to limited and exorbitantly expensive housing. We are addressing this challenge by updating our Comprehensive Plan with data-influenced decisions, improving roads and bridges with detailed analysis, and providing a stable regulatory environment to sustain a vibrant business community with economic opportunity. More government is not the solution. We are an ingredient in the mix of a free market, economic opportunity, a ridiculous quality of life and the opportunity for residents to pursue life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

4. We live in an age where people sue without consequence. Until I took this job I'd never been sued — I've never sued anybody. Bonner County is currently paying three outside law firms and five lawyers to defend us against lawsuits from one employee of the Bonner County Prosecutor's Office. Personally, I think that this is nuts. Property insurance is crazy with the risk of fire like Lahaina's and Paradise Valley. Big insurance companies are pulling out of Idaho. Commissioner Bradshaw and I saved Bonner County \$200,000 by not accepting the status quo and switching to Idaho Farm Bureau Insurance.

5. I've been an Idaho Republican since turning 18. Since taking this job I've been called a "tyrant," "king," "racist" and "misogynist." Chaos merchants who revel in disruption are entitled to their opinions and rage. I've asked what they are mad about and received silence. I've lived for years in warzones serving this country. I know how blessed we are. I choose joy, humility, integrity, professionalism and competence. I am here to serve all of Bonner County.

I chose to serve my country, to teach our youth, and am asking for your vote to protect and defend our quality of life.