



## 2024 General Election Voter Guide

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The logo for the Laramie Boomerang. It features the word "LARAMIE" in a grey, serif font, positioned above the word "BOOMERANG" in a large, bold, red, serif font. The entire logo is set against a light beige background.

The Laramie Boomerang printed this Voter Guide on Saturday, October 12.

The League of Women Voters of Laramie (LWV), in a 54-year partnership with the Laramie Boomerang, prepared this Voter Guide for the November 5, 2024, Wyoming General Election.

## **Important Information**

**Albany County Clerk:** Kayla White

**Election Office/Absentee Poll Place:** Courthouse, 525 Grand Ave. (east, ground level, north door)

**Election Office Phone:** 307-721-2546

**Hours:** 9-5 weekdays, drop box outside 24/7

**Email:** elections@albanycountywy.gov

**Website:** Elections | Albany County, WY (albanycountywy.gov)

## **How to Vote**

Early voting began October 8. In person absentee voting is available at the Elections **Building**, (located on the Courthouse east side parking lot) open Monday - Friday 9 am – 5 pm through November 4. Polls are open on election day, November 5, from 7 am to 7 pm. If you plan to vote on General Election Day and are uncertain where your polling place is located contact the Elections Office. You may register at any time up to November 4 by presenting a valid ID at the county courthouse. If you register after October 21, you will be required to cast a ballot at the same time. If you voted in the 2024 Primary or 2022 General Election, you are registered. You may update your registration information with the Elections Office if your address has changed. Voters can also register with their ID at the polling place on General Election Day. Every person planning to vote at their assigned polling place must show a valid ID. Check the County Clerk’s website for a list of IDs that are acceptable.

You can view sample ballots at the Albany County Clerk’s election website. Candidates on your ballot depend on the City Ward, State House and Senate District in which you live. All ballots contain space for write-in votes. Be sure that the person you write in is qualified for that office. Your ballot will indicate how many candidates to vote for a particular race and please be sure you mark not more than the number indicated (this includes write-in candidates). Voting for more than the indicated number of candidates will result in your vote for that race not being counted as it will be unclear who is your preferred candidate. If you vote for only one although two are allowed for that same office, your vote for one will be counted. The county clerk makes every effort to assure that voters with disabilities of any type are accommodated. There are special voting stations where an ADA ballot marking device is available to assist voters. The election staff will provide curbside voting if needed--call in advance to make special arrangements.

## **Absentee Voting**

All Wyoming registered voters are eligible to vote absentee. If you voted absentee in prior years, you are not automatically set to receive absentee ballots for current elections, per Wyoming Statute. If you voted absentee in the 2024 Primary Election and did not select the box for the General on the request form, or didn’t ask for it, you need to request a ballot

be sent for the General, either by phone, email, in-person, through the Albany County Elections website or by mail. No copy of your ID is required when mailing back an absentee ballot, the ID requirement is only for early voting in person, picking up an absentee ballot and voting in person at the polls on General Election Day.

### **The Offices**

The LWV surveyed all candidates for contact information and responses to identical questions within each of the races for state, county, and city elected offices. If the races are partisan, the party of the candidate will be indicated. Information on the Presidential race is not included in this guide but can be found on the League's [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org) website. There are three Presidential candidates certified in Wyoming, Republican Donald J. Trump, Democrat Kamala D. Harris and Libertarian Chase Oliver.

### **The Questions**

Four questions for each race were formulated by the League of Women Voters, with input from the public. They were emailed to the candidates after the August Primary Election certification to addresses given when the candidate filed for office. The deadline for responses was September 21, 2024. Candidates whose responses had not come received follow-up emails, phone calls or messages.

### **The Responses**

The candidates' statements are exactly as submitted to the League's nationwide website, [Vote 411.org](http://Vote411.org). Each candidate received a unique passcode allowing response entry. Grammar was not corrected. If responses to a given question had several paragraphs, they were combined into one, as spaces between paragraphs use up "characters" for the 750-character limit set by the League. Candidates were asked to provide a photo of themselves specifically for the print edition. Residence address if listed, are taken from [Vote 411](http://Vote411.org) or from the "Candidate Roster" provided by offices of the Wyoming Secretary of State and the Albany County Clerk. Anyone may use that website for race and candidate information specific to the ballot that you will receive.

For races that have wards or districts, those running for the same office are grouped together and the groups are in ascending numerical order with candidates listed within their group in alphabetical order by their last names. All but 6 of the 41 candidates in the City of Laramie, Albany County and two Statewide races participated in the LWV survey for this Voter Guide. Candidates who did not respond are shown in the candidate list for their race and their name is not listed in the question responses.

### **Other Information**

This Voter Guide information is available online at [Vote 411.org](http://Vote411.org). Other non-partisan voter guides and resources can be found online, for example, the LWV and the Albany County Public Library have sponsored General Election Candidate forums, and videos of the forums can be viewed on the library website, [acplwy.org](http://acplwy.org) or the LWV Wyoming website, [wyominglww.org](http://wyominglww.org). A search for a candidate's name (plus Wyoming) may produce other media with information.

## **Thanks to the Candidates**

The filing fee for candidates ranges from \$25 for City Council to over \$500 for the U.S. House and Senate. Candidates give up some privacy by making it possible for constituents to get in touch with them. They are inundated with paperwork; some elected positions require much travel. Compensation is often not what a candidate could have earned in private practice or businesses. Yet, 41 people have decided to seek your vote. Here you will learn their positions on some issues, and information is given for you to contact them about the things you advocate. This is democracy in action; it could not happen without willing candidates.

## **About the League of Women Voters**

The LWV is a non-partisan political organization whose mission is to empower voters and defend democracy. The League does not support candidates or political parties. It is organized and is active with government at national, state, and local levels. The League was founded by members of a women's suffrage organization when it disbanded in 1920 due to ratification of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving all U.S. women the right to vote. However, 50 years earlier, the women of Wyoming Territory were given the right to vote and hold office through an act of the all-male Territorial Assembly in 1869.

## **Laramie City Council Wards 1, 2 and 3**

**Information:** The nine council members are elected three each from three wards on a non-partisan ballot; they receive a stipend of \$120 maximum each day for meetings they attend, with no offices or benefits. They serve four-year terms with no term limits; expiration years are staggered. Candidates are listed below with candidates for the same ward together, in alphabetical order. Vote for 2 for two vacancies in Ward 1. Vote for 2 for two vacancies in Ward 2. Vote for 1 for one vacancy in Ward 3. Winners will join sitting council member Micah Richardson in representing Ward 1, Brandon Newman in representing Ward 2, and Erin O'Doherty and Joe Shumway in representing Ward 3.

### **Candidates:**

#### **William Bowling (Ward 1, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Phone: 307-314-2205

Campaign Website: [www.bowlingforcouncil.com](http://www.bowlingforcouncil.com)

Campaign Instagram URL: [www.instagram.com/bowlingforcouncil/](https://www.instagram.com/bowlingforcouncil/)

Campaign Facebook URL: [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61561323248028](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61561323248028)

#### **Sharon Cumbie (Ward 1, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 1422 East Park Ave Laramie WY 82070

Campaign Phone: 307-760-0382

Campaign Email: [cumbiefor2024@gmail.com](mailto:cumbiefor2024@gmail.com)

Campaign Website: [www.cumbieforcouncil.com](http://www.cumbieforcouncil.com)

**Roxie Hensley (Ward 1, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 1250 Laramie WY 82073  
Campaign Phone: 307-399-1651  
Campaign Email: roxiehensley@gmail.com

**Paul Montoya (Ward 1, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 1974 Truman St Laramie WY 82070  
Campaign Phone: 307-421-5188  
Campaign Website: paulmontoya.com  
Campaign Twitter Handle: PaulForLaramie  
Campaign Instagram URL: [www.instagram.com/paulmontoyaforcouncil/](http://www.instagram.com/paulmontoyaforcouncil/)  
Campaign Facebook URL: [www.facebook.com/paulmontoyacitycouncil/](http://www.facebook.com/paulmontoyacitycouncil/)  
Campaign YouTube URL: @PaulMontoyaforCityCounci-el2id

**Jim Fried (Ward 2, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 664 N 8th St Laramie WY 82072  
Campaign Phone: 314-974-5537  
Campaign Email: friedforlaramie@gmail.com  
Campaign Website: Friedforlaramie.com  
Campaign Facebook URL: [www.facebook.com/Jim Fried for Laramie City Council](http://www.facebook.com/JimFriedforLaramieCityCouncil)

**Brett Glass (Ward 2, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 1693 Laramie WY 82073  
Campaign Phone: 307-745-0351  
Campaign Email: citycouncil@brettglass.com  
Campaign Website: voteglass.org  
Campaign Twitter Handle: glass4laramie

**Brett Kahler (Ward 2, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 672 N 6th St Laramie WY 82072  
Campaign Phone: 307-259-5165  
Campaign Email: bdkahler1@gmail.com  
Campaign Instagram URL: [www.instagram.com/brettkahlerlaramie/](http://www.instagram.com/brettkahlerlaramie/)  
Campaign Facebook URL: [www.facebook.com/brettkahlerlaramie](http://www.facebook.com/brettkahlerlaramie)  
Campaign Website: brettkahlerlaramie.com

**Melanie Vigil (Ward 2, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 1966 Polk St Laramie WY 82070  
Campaign Website: vigilforcouncil.com  
Campaign Email: melanie.vigil17@gmail.com  
Campaign Instagram URL: [www.instagram.com/vigilforcouncil/](http://www.instagram.com/vigilforcouncil/)  
Campaign Facebook URL: [www.facebook.com/Melanie Vigil for Laramie City Council](http://www.facebook.com/MelanieVigilforLaramieCityCouncil)

**Matt Lockhart (Ward 3, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 4131 Shoshone Dr Laramie WY 82072  
Campaign Phone: 307-761-2254

Campaign Email: mattlockhart63@gmail.com  
Campaign Instagram URL: instagram.com/mattlockhart2024  
Campaign Facebook URL: www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560292438560

**Bryan Shuster (Ward 3, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 1981 North 16 St Laramie WY 82072  
Campaign Email: bdshustwyo@yahoo.com  
Campaign Phone: 307-761-0855

**Q: What experience and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**William Bowling (Ward 1):**

**A:** I believe that a vibrant and exciting place like Laramie benefits from cultural opportunities and access, working with local businesses to create engaging and well paying jobs results in retaining a younger workforce and improving the quality of life for all Laramie residents. For example, in 2022, I launched a nationally-funded arts program called Play/Write program in partnership with ACSD1, that teaches creative writing and theater skills in Albany County Elementary schools. The program created several cultural sector jobs and employs several teaching artists. I am dedicated to finding additional creative ways to improve quality of life, and protect and strengthen basic social services.

**Sharon Cumbie (Ward 1):**

**A:** My background is in health care, and I initially decided to run for City Council because I care about people and my community. I've learned skills in communication, organization, community engagement, and problem solving from my work and from volunteering. I've applied these skills during my first term in office, particularly with sustained efforts to bring mental health training into community policing. I've also advocated and voted for aquifer protection, recycling and sustainability projects, and renter safety. I am committed to meaningful public participation in government decision making. I believe honesty, accountability, respect, and kindness should govern our actions as elected officials and as citizens of a democracy.

**Roxie Hensley (Ward 1):**

**A:** My background is in small business. I have owned small businesses for the last 30 years. I have a degree in business and law from UW. I understand how to prepare/manage budgets, set priorities, make tough fiscal decisions, and provide good customer service. My legal work in private practice and with the State of Wyoming has prepared me to ensure quality of services are delivered through the thorough drafting of procedures, policies, and local ordinances. In addition to these technical skills, I have a vision. As a Wyoming native and resident of Laramie for 22 years, I am committed to the success of this state and this city by creating a business-friendly environment that will provide opportunities for our children.

**Paul Montoya (Ward 1):**

**A:** I have attended most Laramie City Council meetings for the last year and a half. Through this attendance I have learned what I could bring to the city of Laramie as a City

Council member. My wife Lynn and I have run more than 6 different businesses over our lifetime. My primary background has been in Radio Broadcasting. We moved to Wyoming about 30 years ago to own and operate two radio stations in Cheyenne. We ran those stations for about 11 years before selling them. During that time, I was President of the Cheyenne Depot Board, President of the Laramie County Library Foundation Board and a board member at the Red Cross. After selling the radio stations we moved to the Laramie area to build and run a bed and breakfast near Laramie.

**Jim Fried (Ward 2):**

**A:** My career has been focused on localized national service with AmeriCorps and grassroots conservation organizations. During this time I helped create the Wyoming Veterans Trail Crew, and the All Women's Crew. I have built trails, repaired fence line, removed hazard trees, and supervised crews on public lands in the Laramie community. I enjoy serving my community and working with passionate people dedicated to the wellbeing of others. The professional responsibilities have taught me to problem solve and work with a variety of stakeholders to find the best possible solution. One of my strengths is communication. As an extrovert, I really enjoy speaking and listening to people.

**Brett Glass (Ward 2):**

**A:** I am an electrical engineer and physicist and owner of two Laramie businesses (including the world's first wireless ISP). I am also an author, singer/songwriter, Extra Class ham radio operator, lover of good coffee and chocolate, and advocate of ethical, transparent, fair, efficient, responsive government. I co-founded the Laramie Film Society. I've served on Laramie's Zoning Board of Adjustment and Traffic Safety Commission and the Wyoming Telecom Council. As a businessperson and engineer, I have a head for numbers and an intuitive sense for when they don't add up. I've lived in Laramie continuously for 32 years and have a deep understanding of its history, economy, and character. For more detail, see my Web page at <http://voteglass.org>.

**Brett Kahler (Ward 2):**

**A:** I've enjoyed participating in civic engagement since high school, where I first learned the value of speaking up and being an engaged member of a community. While at UW, I was president of the Student Government, where I learned how to gather input to make good decisions on behalf of a large community. Since 2010, I have worked with the American Legion Wyoming Boys' State program, and have taught 500+ high school juniors how civic engagement can work in a practical way. I am currently on the City of Laramie's Parks, Tree, & Recreation Advisory Board and the Laramie Plains Civic Center Board. My interest in serving on city council is to make Laramie stronger, which I believe will lead to it being an even better place to live and work.

**Melanie Vigil (Ward 2):**

**A:** My background is in higher education, and I am currently an Assistant Dean of Students at UW. I work with young people daily, and I'm really passionate about creating a city where young people want to stay, build their careers, and raise families. I have served on multiple non-profit boards including the Eppson Center for Seniors and Wyoming Equality, and my experiences giving back to the community have only strengthened my commitment

to this beautiful place we call home. My great grandparents came to Laramie from Mexico to work on the railroad and we've been here ever since. I want to ensure a good quality of life for our community, and that includes protecting our water resources and ensuring we have access to safe and affordable housing.

**Matt Lockhart (Ward 3):**

**A:** I've been a resident of Laramie for over 30 years, & a UW Graduate. I worked in the automobile business at local dealerships for 25 years & now own the Human Bean. I've made countless friendships & relationships throughout all those years & have come close to many people in our community. Through all this, I've acquired years of experience with employee management, sales, budgeting, & most of all—helping people. In both industries it is simple—find a need & fill it. The key to success with anything is listening & communication. We need to listen to our #1 resource—our community. We need to encourage feedback & input from them, & they need to be aware of everything we're discussing in relation to city policy & regulations and growth.

**Bryan Shuster (Ward 3):**

**A:** I have served four terms, eight biannual budgets, and served on over 20 committees. I have gone to school here, and worked in the family business. I am married and raised three children that went to school here in Laramie. Currently I am a teacher at Wyotech. My finest things that I am proud of is the paving of a one block portion of approximately 20 streets off Snowy Range that I lead on City Council budgets, and the work I have contributed on bike trails. With the help of other counselors, we are filling the empty Kmart building.

**Q: What can the City Council do to increase the supply of affordable housing?**

**William Bowling (Ward 1):**

**A:** The current City Council already has adopted the strategy of changing zoning regulations to allow for more housing on a single lot - "additional dwelling units" in zoning lingo. My wife and I rent a house on a property where this has been done, proving the success of existing policies. As a city councilor, I would continue to investigate ways that the city can promote affordable development, such as building out water and sewer connectivity. For example, the north side pressure tank and pipelines enhances water capacity and promotes development. We should look at redeveloping vacant properties within the city. However, I'm not prepared to compromise on regulations that ensure residents' safety or quality of construction.

**Sharon Cumbie (Ward 1):**

**A:** The City Council already has amended city zoning to allow higher density housing (for example, adding accessory dwelling units to a residential lot), and has built out water and sewer infrastructure to encourage new housing. Collaborating with private developers and non-profit organizations can help leverage additional resources and expertise. But we can't get into such a rush that safety or habitability are compromised. Involving the community in planning and decision-making processes is essential to ensure that the options pursued will meet local needs and gain public support. By implementing these



strategies and being an active participant in the process, the Laramie City Council can help address the needs of its residents.

**Roxie Hensley (Ward 1):**

**A:** Is this really a function of city government? The single most important thing the council can do is to make sure they are not doing anything to increase the cost of housing. One idea is to create a task force composed of local builders tasked to identify where inefficiencies caused by regulations and zoning ordinances exist. From this the council could do a cost benefit analysis to determine any impactful changes.

**Paul Montoya (Ward 1):**

**A:** The best thing Laramie can do to encourage affordable housing is to get out of the way. We need to analyze current regulations that inhibit builders, developers and contractors. I have heard far too often from developers that would like to work in the area, that our Unified Building Code drives up costs so much in the Laramie area that it puts housing out of reach for many residents. The other issue is processing time of applications. Complaints of months of application approval wait times is very costly for builders. We need to get wait times down to a few weeks rather than months.

**Jim Fried (Ward 2):**

**A:** There are a few things the City Council could do to increase the supply of affordable housing, and some things that are out of it's control. One role the Council could play is to continue to look at current zoning and roadblocks that many developers face. This could look like modifying zones to allow for denser construction, offering density bonuses, or implementing maximum lot sizes. Having conversations to see if Laramie is willing to move away from single family units, to more denser units could reduce the amount of homes needed moving forward. There are also issues that the City Council can't fix such as Federal, State, and other local regulations or inflation, supply chain issues and other global issues.

**Brett Glass (Ward 2):**

**A:** Housing affordability isn't just a Laramie problem. 300% increases in costs of materials, as well wage hikes, have made newly built housing unaffordable everywhere. We in Laramie have no control over the costs of these inputs. However, we have a secret weapon we are not exploiting: a large stock of older housing that can be refurbished for a fraction of the cost of new construction. This requires time, effort, care, and craftsmanship. To do it we must amend or repeal regulations which have put skilled contractors out of business; simplify the Uniform Development Code; and remove bureaucratic obstacles to housing redevelopment. We must also repeal overly restrictive regulations that have needlessly removed affordable housing from the market.

**Brett Kahler (Ward 2):**

**A:** The City Council needs to explore all the available tools allowed by state statutes to encourage the development of housing. Given the 3,000 housing units that Laramie is currently short of having (that's a lot!), the simple supply/demand economics of the situation is that affordable housing is tough to come by because there aren't enough units

available. If the state legislature expands the usage of tax increment financing to include housing, then the city and newly formed Urban Renewal Agency should consider this tool as an option to attract private development and expand the available housing market.

**Melanie Vigil (Ward 2):**

**A:** I have appreciated the current city council's efforts on adjusting zoning regulations to allow for more dwellings on a single lot. If elected, I would like to further explore lots that already exist but may be vacant. There's opportunity to get creative here! I would like to explore collaborations between private developers and non-profit organizations to see how we can work together to build sustainably, safely, and affordably. I would approach the work we need to do for housing while maintaining a firm commitment to our rental ordinance and a commitment to our West Side neighbors who are passionate about the character of the neighborhood.

**Matt Lockhart (Ward 3):**

**A:** I've spoken with several people and contractors in regards to this. Most infrastructure costs are the responsibility of the developer/contractor/owner. The city council can help adjust that so the City absorbs many of the costs. The City will ultimately earn the Property Tax revenue from the home being built. Costs are so high now, that first time home buyers can't afford a new home, let alone a used home. We need to figure out what costs the city absorbs/takes on so the houses become more affordable.

**Bryan Shuster (Ward 3):**

**A:** Contractors are needed to build more housing in Laramie. The Council has passed ordinances that changed the rules on contractors and made it more difficult to complete projects in a timely basis. Many contractors have either left Laramie or no longer want to do business here and we are now facing a shortage of those who are willing to work in Laramie. We need to create a more favorable environment for contractors to build more housing.

**Q: Should the City Council do more to promote development? What specifically or why not?**

**William Bowling (Ward 1):**

**A:** It's in our community's interest to promote development to generate jobs and increase tax revenues. In my work as an arts educator, I've brought national grant money to Laramie creating cultural sector jobs, because creativity and culture contribute to the fabric of our community in a way that attracts other job creators. The City Council and County Commission have demonstrated a commitment to maintaining a clean water supply, which is a critical part of economic development, and I certainly will continue that commitment if elected. But development needs to be supported by infrastructure and job creation, needs to be environmentally sustainable, and shouldn't result in higher property taxes and higher rents.

**Sharon Cumbie (Ward 1):**

**A:** An intense effort by the City Council and partner organizations brought HomeBase to Laramie, and it will soon be joined by two other new businesses in that area. It's expected that these new businesses will encourage economic growth and job creation, and have already resulted in increased tax revenues. Businesses need good infrastructure, and Laramie has made major strides in addressing the backlog of water system maintenance, which will then lead to street improvements (it is wasteful to repair a street if it's going to be torn up to fix the water main). We're now studying how to improve stormwater management. But we need to be selective in what development we encourage, to ensure we don't damage the environment that makes Laramie special.

**Roxie Hensley (Ward 1):**

**A:** Again, is this really a function of city government. Our quality of life is top notch. We have fresh air, good water, outdoor activities, beautiful scenic views and quality education. What the city can do is to make sure we have great infrastructure, good roads, parks and services so that developers, businesses and families will be attracted to the area.

**Paul Montoya (Ward 1):**

**A:** City council needs to continue to promote quality of life issues in Laramie. We have so many things that people who move to Laramie are looking to enjoy. Hiking, biking, music and cultural events are just a few of the many resources we have to offer. We need to continue to protect these resources when possible. and encourage others to do the same. By improving our quality of life, we will automatically promote good development.

**Jim Fried (Ward 2):**

**A:** I think the city should continue to promote development and work with developers to understand the hurdles they are facing. The city has reduced certain zoning requirements such as removing the square foot requirement, lot widths, lot sizes, all which aim at allowing developers more freedom in their design. Some ideas that I could support would be providing density bonuses or other incentives to developers when considering new construction projects. Another idea that the planning department has brought up would be reducing city costs or fee waivers for developers meeting the city's goals. We need to promote development from a city perspective, because we need housing for our citizens!

**Brett Glass (Ward 2):**

**A:** Housing and business development go hand in hand, and we should promote both. As mentioned above, the former is currently extremely expensive. Buyers of newly built homes will get less for their money if they buy new, and may have trouble affording homes with enough space to contain them. We can help by removing red tape and simplifying the UDC without compromising things that are important to quality of life (e.g. requiring adequate residential parking). Likewise, we should encourage business development by removing obstacles such as overly restrictive zoning, onerous licensing requirements, unnecessary fees and taxes, long permitting delays, and ordinances that reduce the availability of contractors.

**Brett Kahler (Ward 2):**

**A:** The City Council should absolutely promote development, not only of housing, but also of business and amenities that make Laramie a more attractive place to live and visit. After all, I love living here and want others to see why! The Council should make an effort to review current ordinances, in collaboration with developers, to understand if there are obstacles in the way that promote development in Laramie. If there are regulations that are driving developers out of Laramie and to surrounding communities, the Council should consider changes to those regulations that make Laramie the preferable place for developers to do business.

**Melanie Vigil (Ward 2):**

**A:** It's an exciting time to be in Laramie right now. Currently, the talk of the town is the opening of HomeBase and eventual opening of Ross, and I appreciate how these new places will provide jobs and increased offerings to the community. Alongside economic development, important work needs to be done to address infrastructure such as water line maintenance, stormwater management, and more. I want to maintain the current council's commitment to clean water efforts, as I believe we should be good stewards of our precious natural resources when considering development. At the same time as we consider new development efforts, we should take a steadied and measured approach to ensure we build sustainably and efficiently.

**Matt Lockhart (Ward 3):**

**A:** Yes we should. If you're not growing you're going backwards. We need to promote the city and all its amenities. We need almost 2000 more homes to be able to take on companies that would like to move here, and have housing for their transition teams. We also need to develop homes that are affordable to first-time home buyers, and retired individuals. I believe City Council is first and foremost responsible to help grow the city and make it profitable to the residents, along with quality of life.

**Bryan Shuster (Ward 3):**

**A:** You have not specified what type of development you are referring to - business or housing. We need both. Ross was supposed to be open by now but a shortage of contractors has prevented this. As for housing, with USAC funding we will be starting on Bill Nye street behind LHS connect to 30th street. This will open hundreds of acres for more housing development.

**Q: What infrastructure projects would you prioritize for the city of Laramie and why?**

**William Bowling (Ward 1):**

**A:** As mentioned earlier, a top priority for me is keeping our drinking water clean - which means following through on the recommendations of the recently updated protection plan for our aquifer. I also support the work of the current City Council in adding solar panels to government buildings and implementing other ways to achieve energy efficiency. The question of how to provide needed services to city residents while paying close attention to short- and long-term costs doesn't have a simple answer, or we would have done it already. I will be looking for innovative and cost-effective projects to improve water and

energy supplies, recreational opportunities, and safe, accessible movement around town for our aging population.

**Sharon Cumbie (Ward 1):**

**A:** Water infrastructure is a top priority, and the new North Side Tank & Lines will support new housing on the north side of Laramie. This development is important not only for strengthening Laramie's housing market, but also to direct city growth to the north, west and south so that we protect water quality in the Casper Aquifer to the east. As we complete water system improvements, we can turn our attention to streets. I will advocate for clear markings and "traffic calming" mechanisms to promote bicycling and walking. Even in our climate, these are feasible options for most of the year. Continued investment in parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities will help maintain a healthy quality of life in our community.

**Roxie Hensley (Ward 1):**

**A:** Basic services as outlined in the city charter, including building and maintaining streets and parks, functional and updated water and sewer systems, snow removal, affordable trash collection services, and proper funding of our library. This is the basic function of city government. First things first, for the benefit of our citizens and prospective businesses it is imperative that we have first rate infrastructure in place. We should have lower water rates, no potholes, and timely snow removal.

**Paul Montoya (Ward 1):**

**A:** Streets, Streets and Streets. This would mean paving many miles (10% of all streets) that have been unpaved, sometimes for decades. Sidewalks should be included in this as this a barrier for people with disabilities and the elderly. Other infrastructural projects (such as the \$22 million spent in the 3rd Street Public Works building the \$1.4 million spent on the City Hall renovation). We need to get our priorities in order in Laramie when it comes to infrastructure spending.

**Jim Fried (Ward 2):**

**A:** I would continue to build on the work that City Council and the Public Works division have identified as important to the city. These projects largely include replacing and updating water mains, sewer line connections, new sewers, chip-seal and roadway improvements. In addition to continuing these efforts, I will work to continue to protect the Casper Aquifer, and to ensure protection of the Big Laramie River. As a conservationist, water is incredibly vital to our people, our prosperity, and our city. I will work to ensure our water sources are safe and capable of producing enough clean drinking water for future generations.

**Brett Glass (Ward 2):**

**A:** Downtown Laramie needs more parking. Following Cheyenne's lead, we should put plans in motion now to place a multi-level parking ramp, with at least one level underground, on the site of the Bolton lot. Laramie's city government should spend less on exorbitant salaries for middle managers and more on maintenance of streets, water lines, and sewer systems. Sidewalk, curb, and gutter subsidies should be extended to

commercial and non-owner-occupied properties. We should implement adequate flood control and stormwater drainage on the West Side and extend pavement another block from Snowy Range Road in West Laramie. We should catch up on deferred maintenance at the Rec Center and make it financially sustainable without unaffordable fees.

**Brett Kahler (Ward 2):**

**A:** I would prioritize current struggling or failing infrastructure within the city, to include roads and utilities. If the critical infrastructure is not up to date, it not only weakens the quality of life for our residents, but also makes it difficult to attract new residents and businesses to our community. The city should also have a strong focus on working with private utility companies to strengthen their readiness for new projects. As I understand it, the current capacity of Laramie's power grid won't support the 3,000 housing units that we are short on. Without addressing this need, the city won't have the ability to catch up to or surpass the needs that currently exist.

**Melanie Vigil (Ward 2):**

**A:** Something I have been really passionate about in my campaign is how we can prioritize public transportation. I live in West Laramie and I often wonder how our aging neighbors without reliable transportation access their needs such as medical appointments, grocery stores, and more. I would like to explore how we can better serve our elders and provide sustainable solutions for getting folks where they need to go. Another area surrounding infrastructure that I've been passionate about is our clean drinking water. I was proud of our city council and county commission for working together to protect our most precious resource and if elected, I would work to follow through on current recommendations outlined in the plan.

**Matt Lockhart (Ward 3):**

**A:** I'd like to see the city purchase land, put in the infrastructure, then sell it to developers, or home buyers so they can build homes. We also need parking downtown. Also, we don't have enough electricity/power to grow. From what I'm told we're almost out of power. If we want to grow the city population, we need power. We need to buy more power to meet the needs of more homes, businesses and people.

**Bryan Shuster (Ward 3):**

**A:** My main priorities would be streets first, with water infrastructure close behind. There are many streets where the water mains continually break and are constantly under repair. I would like to see more of these older water lines replaced.

## **Albany County Commissioner**

**Information:** Three commissioners serve four-year staggered terms with no term limits. Commissioners receive a salary of \$30,000 and some benefits, but no office. One seat is up for election this year; voters will choose one, either the Democrat or Republican, and the winner will join sitting Commissioners Pete Gosar (D) and Terri Jones (R) who have two years left on their terms.

## **Candidates:**

### **Brian Harrington (D)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 2216 Laramie WY 82073

Campaign Phone: 307-272-9903

Campaign Email: [info@harringtonforcommission.com](mailto:info@harringtonforcommission.com)

Campaign Website: [www.harringtonforcommission.com](http://www.harringtonforcommission.com)

Campaign Instagram URL: [www.instagram.com/harringtonforcommission](http://www.instagram.com/harringtonforcommission)

Campaign Facebook URL: [www.facebook.com/people/Brian-Harrington-for-County-Commissioner](http://www.facebook.com/people/Brian-Harrington-for-County-Commissioner)

### **Thad Hoff (R)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 297 Laramie WY 82073

Campaign Phone: 307-760-3025

Campaign Email: [thadforalbanycounty@gmail.com](mailto:thadforalbanycounty@gmail.com)

Campaign Website: [thad4albany.com](http://thad4albany.com)

## **Q: What experience and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

### **Brian Harrington (D):**

**A:** My mom and dad battled poverty from the day they became parents, especially after my sister's birth, which resulted in a mountain of medical debt. I know what it means to work hard, to budget, and to rely on your neighbors when you need help. Our family was able to maintain a sense of determination and hope that I leaned on when starting a new business and a family in Laramie. In my photography work and from my service on City Council, I know how important it is to listen carefully and to value the experiences of others - and how it feels to sit in the hot seat and make decisions when you know you can't please everyone. I pledge to show up prepared to work hard and to make cost-conscious decisions for the taxpayers of Albany County.

### **Thad Hoff (R):**

**A:** Owning a business and working in the community for the last 21 years has given me the opportunity and personal satisfaction of getting to know a lot of people from every walk of life. I have owned and operated Wyoming State Safe & Lock since 2003, providing security and life safety to the citizens, businesses, and government agencies. I have always tried to be a businessperson that is part of the community. I am a Wyoming native and grew up in Riverton, am a UW graduate and love spending time exploring anything outdoors. On the business side, I regularly spend time in budget meetings, future planning, and execution of planned contracts. I am constantly engaging with county residents daily and not hard to get a hold of.

## **Q: If elected what would your top two priorities be? Please explain.**

### **Brian Harrington (D):**

**A:** It's a tough job to get local governments to work together, but I've found success in that effort as Mayor. My first priority would be continuing cooperation between the City of

Laramie and Albany County; we can achieve more with efficient use of taxpayers' dollars. Continuing cooperation leads to my second priority, keeping our drinking water clean. A lot of hard work went into updating and unifying the Casper Aquifer Protection Plan, and I'm committed to implementing its recommendations. Nothing is more important than maintaining clean drinking water for county residents inside and outside the city limits. A close third would be maintaining the city-county collaboration providing emergency medical services throughout Albany County.

**Thad Hoff (R):**

**A:** Well first off, it is important to consider that the needs today may be minimal for those in years to come. One of my goals, if I can call it a priority, for the next four years would be to reduce the burden of government on the residents of Albany County. Ensuring that the government of Albany County works for all the citizens and not the other way around. Certainly, I will also be focused on working with the setting commissioners to ensure that the county continues to provide needed services to residents, no matter what tax income is available. Another four-year goal would be to economize services through automation and efficiency streamlining. If it saves the county money and the taxpayers' dollars then I am open to all suggestions.

**Q: What specific cuts would you make in the county budget if revenue declines?**

**Brian Harrington (D):**

**A:** While the County Commissioners set the county budget, they don't actually run any departments. The voters elect seven other county officials to conduct that essential work (sheriff, clerk, treasurer, etc.), so I can't in good conscience pinpoint specific cuts now without input from them. I can say that as a business owner, I know that turnover and training is expensive both in dollars and in quality of service. I would prioritize keeping up with wages and benefits to retain dedicated, experienced employees who already are implementing ways to provide county services as efficiently as possible. If revenue declines are due to property tax cuts, some of our county's 16 special districts providing specific services may also be affected.

**Thad Hoff (R):**

**A:** Practical downsizing and percentage reduction will be the least drastic. Consultation with the other elected officials and department heads will be critical in identifying locations they may have already earmarked for spending cuts. I would also like to thoroughly review options for revenue sources that may not have been previously available or considered. I would like to encourage more private economic development, so the county and its residents aren't dependent on the University and its salary contributions. We, as a community, need to develop more industry and local-based economic options. "Welcome to Albany County" should be in everyone's best interest.

**Q: Would you propose any changes to protect underground and surface water in Albany County?**



**Brian Harrington (D):**

**A:** Clean water is essential to community and economic development. A majority of the current County Commission has substantially strengthened regulatory protections for the Casper Aquifer that benefit both domestic wells and the city system. As a Commissioner, I would build on this foundation and work hard to turn the aquifer protection plan recommendations into reality, starting with expansion of the monitor well network and other data collection projects to inform our decision making. The City Council has invested substantially in securing senior water rights on the Laramie River, and I would work with the Conservation District and other agencies to help maintain surface water quality for people and livestock in the watershed.

**Thad Hoff (R):**

**A:** No, at this moment in time Albany County has clean drinking water and I certainly want to keep it that way. This question being considered would imply otherwise, but a great deal of time and energy has gone into the safeguarding of such a precious resource. My concern would be for all 4,309 square miles of Albany County, not just the aquifer. I would trust that landowners who live and draw from water from the aquifer would have a vested interest in its purity. I would make sure that we as a community are prepared to contain a spill or contamination of our waterways and aquifer recharge.

**Albany County Hospital District Trustees**

**Information:** Non-Partisan, Four-year terms. Vote for three. Winners will join two current trustees whose terms expire in 2026, Stephen Maguire and Terry Roark.

**Candidates:**

**Dennis Cook (Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 1066 Hidalgo Dr. Laramie WY 82072

Campaign Phone: 307-760-1144

Campaign Email: cookd@cookandassociatespc.com

**Rex Gantenbein (Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 150 Butte Loop, Laramie WY 82070

Campaign Phone: 307-399-7246

Campaign Email: REXGANTENBEIN@GMAIL.COM

**Rick Melone (Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 3207 Alta Vista Drive, Laramie WY 82072

Campaign Phone: 307-760-6769

Campaign Email: richardmelone@yahoo.com

**Jennifer Scozzafava (Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Email: jenna@qualityivcare.com

Did not respond to questions prior to publication of this guide.

**Q: What experience and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Dennis Cook:**

**A:** I served as a member and also as the chair of the hospital trustees and the Iverson Memorial Hospital (IMH) Board of Directors 19 of the past 30 years. Therefore, I have the experience necessary to perform the duties of a Hospital Trustee. I am very proud of the many accomplishments of IMH and its exceptional staff during my terms as trustee and director. I am honored to have been associated with the hundreds of skilled professional caregivers and staff at IMH who serve the healthcare needs of our community. Quality health care is the key to the quality of life in Albany County and essential for economic development. As a Hospital Trustee, I will work to ensure that quality health care continues at IMH.

**Rex Gantenbein:**

**A:** I have served as a Trustee for the District for eight years, including the last two as the board chair. In addition, I retired from UW as a professor in Health Sciences, where I conducted research and education activities related to rural health.

**Rick Melone:**

**A:** I am seeking my fourth term as a Trustee for the Albany Hospital District. In addition to serving the County as a Trustee, I have and continue to serve on the Hospital's operating board of directors, where I have been past chair of the finance committee and current chair of the hospital's investment committee. My interest is to continue as a Trustee to ensure that both Boards continue to provide the highest level of care to Albany County and surrounding communities. I am a retired banker who has been involved in community service for the 26 years I have resided in Laramie.

**Q: What are the main challenges facing the hospital district and how would you address them?**

**Dennis Cook:**

**A:** Although we can be proud of IMH, there is one part of the Health Care delivery system that requires fixing. To put it bluntly, we need to construct a modern nursing home and rehabilitation facility to provide an alternative to the existing nursing home. It is old, outdated and inadequate to meet the needs of our aging population. To accomplish that goal initially requires repealing a Wyoming law that gives the current nursing home operator a monopoly to operate without competition. Then without taxing property owners, we need to work together to apply the significant resources of IMH to build a new and modern nursing home and rehabilitation facility for which we can be proud. It will be my mission to accomplish those goals.

**Rex Gantenbein:**

**A:** I see the main challenge to the hospital to be attracting and keeping quality professional staff. While the board does not directly deal with personnel, our job of ensuring the fiscal wellness of the district helps in maintaining salaries commensurate with those people's skills.

**Rick Melone:**

**A:** The first main challenge facing the district is making sure the hospital can sustain adequate cash flow, both short term and long term, to continue providing services and quality healthcare for Albany County. IMH must continue to manage its cash flow to a level that best supports the best quality patient care. The second challenge is looking well beyond the current fiscal year to extend the life of the current facilities. This entails planning the projected growth and facility needs for the next 10-15 years and beyond, which is currently in process. Finally, the third challenge is covering the steady increase in uncompensated care. Both uncompensated care and charity care have been increasing in the past several years combined with reductions in Medicare reimbursements.

**Q: Most of the mill lev taxes are currently allocated to the hospital for uncompensated care. Do you support this policy and why, or would you make changes, and if so, what?**

**Dennis Cook:**

**A:** Wyoming law requires IMH to provide uncompensated care for people who are unable to pay for their care. That same law requires the Hospital Trustees to reimburse IMH for that uncompensated care from the funds received from the 3% property tax mill levy. In 2023 IMH provided \$3,385,000 of uncompensated care and the Hospital Trustees collected and paid \$2,055,730 to IMH. The only change that I foresee in that historic use of the mill levy is the potential reduction in uncompensated care if the Legislature approves the Medicaid expansion benefits for low income working families. Medicaid expansion could reduce the cost of uncompensated care by 50% or more and allow the trustees to use a portion of the mill levy for something else.

**Rex Gantenbein:**

**A:** I absolutely support this policy. The financial branch of the hospital does not ignore cases of uncompensated care, but neither does it address them overzealously. The mill levy does not completely cover this cost, but it reduces it to a manageable level, given the hospital's strong financial condition.

**Rick Melone:**

**A:** Yes, I strongly support the policy. Changes would come about if during an annual review of the policy it was determined that there was a significant increase in uncompensated care. Laramie continues to see steady increases in uncompensated care that supports the less fortunate. Factors such as economic conditions that continue to contribute to these increases are not likely to be remedied in the near term.

**Q: How much control or influence do trustees have over the management of the hospital and hospital services?**

**Dennis Cook:**

**A:** IMH is locally owned and operated for the benefit of Albany County. IMH is a not-for-profit tax-exempt corporation managed by the IMH Board of Directors. They operate IMH under the terms of a lease agreement with the Hospital District Trustees. The Hospital District is a government entity that owns all of the property occupied by IMH. Under the

lease agreement, the Hospital District Trustees are the landlord with oversight over its property and all improvements. The Hospital District Trustees also oversee the operations of IMH to ensure continued quality care and financial viability. However, the day-to-day management of IMH and the services it provides are under the control of the IMH Board of Directors.

**Rex Gantenbein:**

**A:** Our primary responsibility is to review the management of the hospital finances to ensure their stability. However, we do review all major reports and approve them when appropriate, as does the Board of Directors. As chair of the trustees, I attend all directors' meetings, so the trustees are always made aware of current and planned activities. Further, hospital management is open and communicative with our board and listens to any concerns we may have.

**Rick Melone:**

**A:** Trustees do have the ultimate control and responsibility over management and hospital services. They are not involved in the day-to-day operation of the hospital. Trustees, who meet quarterly, review the performance and metrics of the hospital and are provided updates on important information, procedures and policies affecting performance and service.

### **Albany County Fire District #1**

**Information:** Non-Partisan, Four-year terms. No candidates filed for the two Director vacancies; seats currently held by Luke Hawkins and Brett Wadsworth expire in 2024. These two positions will be filled by Write-in candidates. The winners will join one other District Director, Matt Burkart, whose term expires in 2026.

### **Laramie Rivers Conservation District**

**Information:** Non-Partisan, Four-year terms. Five members serve as Supervisors, three rural, one urban and one at large. Vote for three for the two rural and one urban position whose terms expire this year. Winners will join one rural supervisor, Zachary Iddings; and one at large supervisor, Mandy Marney whose terms expire in 2026.

**Candidates:**

**John Corson (Rural, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Email: [toltecbaggs@wbaccess.net](mailto:toltecbaggs@wbaccess.net)

Did not respond to questions prior to publication of this guide.

**Mary Fick Monteith (Urban, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Email: [PEAK2PUB@MSN.COM](mailto:PEAK2PUB@MSN.COM)

**Larry Munn (Rural, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 145 HARMONY LN, LARAMIE WY 82070

Campaign Phone: 307-735-0028

Campaign Email: LCMUNN@UWYO.EDU

**Q: What experience and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Mary Fick Monteith (Urban):**

**A:** Most in Albany County and the surrounding area know the Laramie Rivers Conservation District for their annual tree and shrub sale. As a child, my family planted hundreds of trees and bushes to halt soil erosion and to improve wildlife habitat. I moved here in 1971 to attend UW, buying my first home in West Laramie in 1979. I, too, purchased trees and bushes which I planted in my large yard. I've enjoyed gardening, hiking and cycling trails, attending County Fair and Conservation Expos. Working at Job Service, I came to know business owners and was an AG liaison for local ranchers. My 20 years as a Realtor exposed me to everything entailed in property ownership, within city and rural environments. I've volunteered on multiple boards and been active in community activities.

**Larry Munn (Rural):**

**A:** I taught Soil Science in the UW College of Agriculture for 33 years. I also conducted research on mine land reclamation and other topics, and was the UW representative to the National Cooperative Soil Survey Program. I believe that water quality issues are very important for present and future generations of Wyoming citizens.

**Q: What changes or threats to the environment around the Laramie rivers concern you?**

**Mary Fick Monteith (Urban):**

**A:** Water quality and preservation of our ranching/agricultural heritage are a great concern for me. As Laramie and Albany County seek to balance competing demands for growth and water, ranchers/farmers have always struggled to maintain their land at its highest productivity. Growth and weather have meant shrinking water resources, soil erosion and wildlife habitat loss.

**Larry Munn (Rural):**

**A:** Right now, the West is seeing intense forest fire events that impact our watersheds, we are seeing subdivisions impacting wildlands, and we are seeing both old and new energy development that presents challenges to maintaining water quantity and quality.

**Q: What do you wish the public knew more about this agency's services, and how would you promote better engagement?**

**Mary Fick Monteith (Urban):**

**A:** In addition to the tree and shrub sale, there are many projects that address water quality, soil, energy conservation, wildlife habitat or those that beautify the natural

landscape and benefit our area. See the Annual Summary July 2023 – June 2024 at <https://www.lrcd.net/annual-reports> for the most recent list. Outreach and education, cooperative liaisons with area agencies and organizations, and a presence on social media speak loudest to the benefits provided.

**Larry Munn (Rural):**

**A:** The LRCO offers numerous programs that cost share on water development for livestock and wildlife, share costs on wildlife friendly fencing, develop wind breaks, stream bank stabilization for our rivers, weed control, etc. We support the Laramie community garden, the Pilot Hill Aquifer Protection project, trees in Laramie, and other projects.

**Q: How do you interact with other agencies to carry out your mission?**

**Mary Fick Monteith (Urban):**

**A:** Cooperative engagement emphasizes the commonalities of interests, reducing competition and conflict. Encouraging others to focus on such projects improves the quality of life for us all.

**Larry Munn (Rural):**

**A:** LRCO collaborates with the City of Laramie, the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Game and Fish, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Albany County Weed and Pest, Rooted in Laramie, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. DEQ. and other land management organizations.

**Albany County School District (ACSD) #1 Board of Trustees**

**Information:** Albany County School District #1 Trustee Area A, four-year term. Albany County School District #1 At-Large, four-year term. Voters will select 3 candidates for the Area A seats, and 1 candidate for the At-Large seat. The four election winners will join the five sitting members whose terms expire in 2026: Beth Bear (Area A), Steve Gosar (Area A), Carrie Murthy (Area A), Janice Marshall (Area B), Nate Martin (At-Large). The ACSD Board of Trustees includes nine elected officials, serving 4-year terms (Area A, Area B, At-Large); 6 residing in Area A, 1 residing in Area B, and 2 At-Large. Area A refers to the city limits, excluding Cottonwood Estates and Roach Addition; Area B refers to county limits, including Cottonwood Estates and Roach Addition; At-Large includes Areas A and B. The city verses county lines impact which area a candidate can run in. Those that live in the city limits must run in area A or At-Large and those living in the county must run in Area B or At/Large. This ensures a representative from both rural and city areas is elected to represent the interest of the voters.

**Candidates:**

**Cecilia (CC) Aragon (Area A, Four Year, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 1634 Ord Street, Laramie WY 82070

Campaign Email: CCARAGON1@GMAIL.COM

**Sylvia-Grace Fonfara (Area A, Four Year, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Website: [www.fonfaraforacsd1.com/](http://www.fonfaraforacsd1.com/)

Campaign Facebook URL: [www.facebook.com/fonfaraforacsd1](http://www.facebook.com/fonfaraforacsd1)

Campaign Email: SYLVIAGRACEFONFARA@GMAIL.COM

**Alex Moon Krassin (Area A, Four Year, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Email: [amkrassin@gmail.com](mailto:amkrassin@gmail.com)

**Emily Siegel Stanton (Area A, Four Year, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 507 S 4th St, Laramie WY 82070

Campaign Phone: 307-399-4508

Campaign Email: [siegelstantonforscheolboard@gmail.com](mailto:siegelstantonforscheolboard@gmail.com)

Campaign Website: [www.emilyforscheolboard.net](http://www.emilyforscheolboard.net)

**Thomas Mullan (At-Large, Four Year, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Email: [TM@I80TOWING.COM](mailto:TM@I80TOWING.COM)

Did not respond to questions prior to publication of this guide.

**Kim Sorenson (At-Large, Four Year, Non-Partisan)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 2310 Cottonwood Drive, Laramie WY 82070

Campaign Phone: 307-742-0658

Campaign Facebook URL: [www.facebook.com/KSorensonACSD1](http://www.facebook.com/KSorensonACSD1)

Campaign Email: [kdsorenson@aol.com](mailto:kdsorenson@aol.com)

**Q. What experience and interests do you have that prepare you for this office?**

**Cecilia (CC) Aragon (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** I have a range of teaching experiences in public schools starting from working with Head Start, middle school, to high school. I have 25 years teaching at the university level. Currently, I have served 1 year as an appointed trustee on ACSD1 board.

**Sylvia-Grace Fonfara (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** I was born and raised in Laramie and received my K-12 education in the Albany County school district. During this time I experienced both great success and devastating failure, which allowed me to see the best and the worst our school system has to offer. My firsthand experience of the challenges non-traditional students face and how our district has historically managed them gives me insight the board currently lacks. With the district considering creating a new school of choice to meet the needs of children displaced by the turmoil surrounding the Lab School, having someone on the board who grew up neurodivergent in Albany County's school system and can truly understand the needs of this population is more important now than ever before.

**Alex Moon Krassin (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** I am a mother, and I have been a mental health clinician in Laramie Wyoming for 8 years and have worked in the field for over 10 years. I have experience working with youth in crisis, with students pursuing higher education, and finally now as a small business owner.

As a mental health provider, I have experience within assessing individual needs, as well as systems needs and then implementing solution focused interventions to meet these needs. I do believe this has been helpful to my role as a board member, in the two years that I've been a board member, we have received and reviewed climate assessments in our school district, this has led to some proactive attempts to reduce bullying, racism, and overall mental health in our district.

**Emily Siegel Stanton (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** I am running for a second term to serve on the ACSD1 Board of Trustees, with one four year term of experience informing my candidacy. The learning curve for new trustees is steep, it takes one yearly cycle to have exposure to school improvement plans, the budget approval process and to understand the board-superintendent partnership. In another two years, trustees begin to see the impact of the decisions we make as they unfold in the district. As a mental health professional, I have a particular eye for the culture and climate of the school buildings and the experience of the teaching and learning environments.

**Kim Sorenson (At-Large, Four Year):**

**A:** We moved to Laramie in 1994. I have been an Elementary Teacher (Thermopolis: Hot Springs County School District #1), Physical Education Instructor (HSCSD#1), Coach (Basketball, Track and Volleyball at HSCSD#1), Athletic Director (HSCSD#1 and ACSD#1), Assistant Principal (Laramie High School[LHS]), Elementary Principal (Linford), High School Principal (LHS), Adjunct Instructor (LCCC), and a Ski Instructor and Ski School Director at Snowy Range. I retired in 2014. I was elected to the Albany County School Board in 2020, and was the Board's Chairman in 2023. My wife of 43 years, Rozanne, is a retired Elementary Teacher. Our two children, Sarah and Jonathan are LHS graduates. One of my five Grandchildren, Colben, is a Freshman at LHS.

**Q. How would you prevent another budget crisis?**

**Cecilia (CC) Aragon (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** It is important to know the essential line items in the budget to make schools and employees function at their best. I will work with all of the ACSD1 Board members, the Finance Committee, Superintendent, and the CFO to define the deficit type in our budget to determine where overspending is happening. Also we need to prioritize spending and anticipate future costs. The board needs to spend conservatively these next couple of years and not start new schools or projects that will cost us money and spending. It is important to closely look at the budget and see where we can cut expenses in a way that we are not jeopardizing student success. We need to prioritize teacher pay, student success, wellness, learning, and student achievement.

**Sylvia-Grace Fonfara (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** Budget crises happen when money is spent recklessly without consideration for long-term stability. To prevent this, the budget needs to be constantly evaluated to determine what is benefitting our children the most and should be prioritized for funding and what can be trimmed back. School staff, particularly the teachers working with our kids day in and day out, need to be actively involved in this process (along with every other decision that



impacts their classrooms) because they are the ones who understand their students best and have the necessary experience to inform the board and administration what resources are truly needed.

**Alex Moon Krassin (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** Preventing another budget crisis requires continuous education on our public school finance system, understanding how legislation affects our school district's finances, and ensuring that audits are done in a timely manner. It also requires collaboration with our school teachers, administration, and all staff to see where there are substantial budget needs to ensure we are meeting the needs of students and staff. As our state continues to invest less in public school it will take collaboration, flexibility and transparency to continue providing excellent education to our students on a limited budget. While we, as a school board, have made decisions that have been difficult and heart wrenching at times, our budget now reflects more accuracy.

**Emily Siegel Stanton (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** A number of changes have occurred that I believe will prevent another budget crisis. The current Superintendent suggested creating three standing committees, one of which is finance. Three board members serving on this committee have reduced the opacity of the budget process and have gained detailed, thorough knowledge of the budgeting process. We have uncovered a misalignment between declining enrollment and the number of full time employees, and went through a process to “right size” the district.

**Kim Sorenson (At-Large, Four Year):**

**A:** A perfect storm of events contributed, but we weathered the budget crisis. The contributing events included declining enrollment, lack of adequate funding, replacing multiple Chief Financial Officers (CFO), and the sale/closing of our Auditor's firm. We learned the importance of...working with our Legislative team; seeking the advice of legal/financial experts; Trustees attending School Finance and Public Office Training; initiating an Administrative/Board-level School Finance Committee; studying the extent of declining enrollment; developing/training cross-over skills with multiple employees; soliciting input from the educational community; prioritizing reduction options; questioning all expenditures; and making timely, difficult decisions.

**Q. How would you enhance timely and transparent communication between the Board and the public?**

**Cecilia (CC) Aragon (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** During the time that I served as ACSD1 trustee, I voted to approve a Media and Communication Specialist position. I believe this was a great start to enhance timely and transparent communication. As a board member, I believe in meeting with constituents on a regular basis. Being approachable and accessible to the public is a high priority for me. I believe that ACSD1 does a great job at making board meetings accessible via zoom.

**Sylvia-Grace Fonfara (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** This is my area of expertise, since I started practicing public speaking and communication in kindergarten and have made a lifelong commitment to improving and refining these critical life skills. During my interactions with the current school board, I've seen them having difficulty in two key areas: sharing information clearly and having long-term conversations with the community. My plan to facilitate these direct conversations with the public is actively seeking out input at every opportunity, as well as employing two of my favorite strategies. Listening to understand involves focusing on what you're being told instead of what you're going to say in response, and knowing your audience is essential for every successful interaction.

**Alex Moon Krassin (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** This is an area that has been identified as a weakness. I do believe we can do better and promise to continue hearing the community and problem solving in this area. I believe this is a very profound question with many layers. We live in a time where information is always at our fingertips and there is a balance in providing accurate information that is also ethically provided. I do not think we have found this balance, but I want to strive to do so. My ideas fall into two different areas. We need to streamline our external information outlets provided to the public, boarddocs, the schools webpage, our meetings, facebook, and our Laramie journalists. We need to be forthright in our internal communication with our parents and staff.

**Emily Siegel Stanton (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** Our district continues to struggle with communication. Despite our best efforts, the public continues to feel we are not communicating effectively about news and the board process. I voted for a communications director despite very reasonable objections to devoting the salary to the budget line, because I feel creating some consistency is key. I would like to see a page on our website labeled "how we communicate," detailing what information comes out where and when, clarifying what is posted to board docs, what to look for on social media, and what goes out through remind and email.

**Kim Sorenson (At-Large, Four Year):**

**A:** Effective communication between the Board and those entrusting us to oversee the local educational system, is one of our most important functions, and allows us to operate at our highest capacity. We must provide all with opportunities to participate in respectful, thoughtful dialogue, or the Board may be unable to deliver the best educational opportunities, provide rewarding benefits and salaries, and implement comprehensive solutions to issues and expectations facing our staff, students, parents, and community. Our Strategic Plan, Board goals, hearings, Public Communications, technology, and inviting students, staff, parents, and community members for opportunities to serve on important committees are being implemented at this time.

**Q. What is your position on involvement of the state legislature in our schools?**

**Cecilia (CC) Aragon (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** I strongly believe that there needs to be a balance between local autonomy and state policy making. For many years, I have had a close eye on how WY state legislature plays a role in shaping educational policy within our state. The policy set by legislation includes setting standards for curriculum, funding models, teacher qualifications with PTSB, and school operations to name a few. I have witnessed over time, how national politics and extreme political stances have negatively effected WY public education. Political parties and special interest groups are fueling the polarization over education. The focus needs to be a bi-partisan balance on public education with student success rather than prioritizing national political party agenda

**Sylvia-Grace Fonfara (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** Legislative involvement has the potential to both help and hinder our schools, and the difference between those outcomes is whether they take the time to understand the communities impacted by their policies. Every school district is different, and because of this, statewide legislation that applies equally to every district regardless of their unique circumstances does more harm than good. For example, the law requiring schools to tell parents if their kid come out as LGBT is not widely supported in Albany County, and our school board legally does not have the authority to address the wants and needs of the Laramie community in the policy they were forced to pass. This sets a dangerous precedent that will hurt children in the long run.

**Alex Moon Krassin (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** We are facing changing landscapes in our public education through our state legislature. It is essential that public education is being funded equitably and thoroughly. Our children, teachers, school staff, and communities deserve the very best we can offer, that requires funding.

**Emily Siegel Stanton (Area A, Four Year):**

**A:** The state legislature has a critical role in appropriating funding for public education. Unfortunately, through misperceptions and political agenda, we are seeing an increasing push for charter schools in Wyoming. I do not believe in draining public funds for charter schools, instead I would like to develop programs in the district to meet the needs of our student community. I would like to see the State Legislature fund our public schools in such a way that teacher salaries are commensurate with teachers incredible skill and commitment. I would like to see the legislature entrust school boards as the local governing bodies to make decisions about controversial issues based on what is best for our local community.

**Kim Sorenson (At-Large, Four Year):**

**A:** We enjoy an excellent relationship with our Legislators and are extremely fortunate they represent us. They are genuinely interested in the well-being of those within our educational community. My experiences have proven they are extremely intelligent and always empathic to the needs of those in Albany County School District #1. They are quick to communicate with us regarding potential actions which may have an impact on our District. They are extremely responsive to our requests, and willingly advocate for what is

best for the students and staff of our community and District. I believe our Legislators are excellent representatives of our City, County, and Albany County School District #1. Their expertise and support is appreciated!

## **Wyoming State House of Representatives HD 13, HD 14, HD 45, HD 46**

**Information:** Representatives are elected to a two-year term with no term limits. Each Representative receives a minimum of \$300 per month base salary. They also receive \$150.00 per day while the Legislature is in session plus \$109.00 per day per diem. They receive pay for committee and work meetings between sessions. Each quarter they receive \$750 for a constituent service allowance. Minimum age is 21. There are four House Districts in Albany County, HD 13, HD 14, HD 45 and HD 46, each with one representative. All four seats are up for election in 2024. The Legislature meets in a General Session in odd numbered years, starting on the second Tuesday in January, and for a Budget Session in even numbered years beginning on the second Monday of February. The General Session is limited to 40 legislative days. The Budget Session typically lasts 20 legislative days.

### **Candidates:**

#### **Ken Chestek (HD 13, D)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 4317 Cliff St Laramie WY 82070

Campaign Phone: 307-460-9139

Campaign Email: kchestek@gmail.com

Facebook: Ken Chestek for HD 13

Website: [www.chestekforhd13.com/](http://www.chestekforhd13.com/)

#### **Shane Swett (HD 13, R)**

Campaign Email: shaneswett3@gmail.com

Did not respond to questions prior to publication of this guide.

#### **Joe Giustozzi (HD 14, R)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 1770, Laramie WY 82073

Campaign Phone: 307-460-2071

Campaign Email: [campaign2024@proton.me](mailto:campaign2024@proton.me)

Facebook: Joe Giustozzi for Wyoming

Campaign Website: [joeforwyoming.com](http://joeforwyoming.com)

#### **Trey Sherwood (HD 14, D)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 49 North Street Laramie WY 82072

Campaign Phone: 307-760-2722

Campaign Email: [Treysherwood@gmail.com](mailto:Treysherwood@gmail.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/reptreysherwood/>

Campaign Website: [www.treysherwood.com](http://www.treysherwood.com)

#### **Paul Crouch (HD 45, R)**

Campaign Email: [paulcrouchforwyohouse45@gmail.com](mailto:paulcrouchforwyohouse45@gmail.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/people/Paul-Crouch-for-Wyoming-House-District-45](https://www.facebook.com/people/Paul-Crouch-for-Wyoming-House-District-45)  
Campaign Website: [www.paulcrouchforwyohouse45.com](http://www.paulcrouchforwyohouse45.com)  
Did not respond to questions prior to publication of this guide.

**Karlee Provenza (HD 45, D)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 1715 Laramie WY 82072  
Campaign Phone: 307-977-0202  
Campaign Email: [karleerprovenza@gmail.com](mailto:karleerprovenza@gmail.com)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Provenza4Wyoming>  
Campaign Website: [www.provenzaforwyoming.com](http://www.provenzaforwyoming.com)

**Ocean Andrew (HD 46, R)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 2148 Laramie WY 82073  
Campaign Phone: 307-316-9246  
Campaign Email: [Contact@oceanandrew.com](mailto:Contact@oceanandrew.com)  
Campaign Website: [OceanAndrew.com](http://OceanAndrew.com)

**Chris Lowry (HD 46, D)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 561 Laramie WY 82073  
Campaign Phone: 307-256-0705  
Campaign Email: [chris@lowryhd46.com](mailto:chris@lowryhd46.com)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560452459658](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560452459658)  
Campaign Website: Chris Lowry for HD46 ([lowryhd46.com](http://lowryhd46.com))

**Q: Describe the education, experience, and skills that qualify you for this office.**

**Ken Chestek (HD 13, D):**

**A:** I am a former trial lawyer (over 20 years of experience) and recently retired professor at the UW College of Law, where I taught primarily legal writing courses. Part of the courses I taught involved teaching statutory interpretation and legal analysis, skills which are vitally important to being a state legislator. I am also completing my first term as State Representative for House District 13, where I have built relationships with other legislators from around the state. I am a team player and consensus builder, happy to work with any legislator regardless of political affiliation, whenever we can find common ground to create policies and laws to improve the lives of everyday Wyoming citizens.

**Joe Giustozzi (HD 14, R):**

**A:** My training in college and in graduate school was in engineering and mathematics. Most of my professional career was spent working on numerous military and commercial aircraft programs. I am an entrepreneur and have started several small and successful engineering and software companies. I understand first-hand how difficult it is to start a small business and nurture it with long hours into a successful one. Small businesses are the heart of our nation's economy and must be protected ... especially from Federal overreach that has already inflicted much damage using their Covid lockdowns to force a substantial percentage of them to close their doors for good.

**Trey Sherwood (HD 14, D):**

**A:** I have 20 years of community building experience in Laramie, as an economic developer, a non profit director, volunteer and public historian. I am a graduate of Leadership Wyoming and currently serve on the House Appropriations Committee. I utilize civility, honesty, optimism and empathy as essential leadership skills in my service to my constituents, Wyoming's small businesses and hard working families. I enjoy learning new things and building relationships around shared goals. When re-elected, I will continue to work on solutions for affordable housing, opportunities for young people, increase funding for education and access to mental health services while preserving the freedom of individuals to make their own healthcare decisions.

**Paul Crouch (HD 45, R):**

**A:** As a husband, father of four, and church leader, I have learned to approach challenges with wisdom, fairness, and a focus on the common good. These roles have instilled in me a deep sense of responsibility, integrity, and service to others. I pride myself on being not only a good listener but also an action-based, take-charge person. I am committed to putting into action what the people in my community want. I earned a bachelor's degree in Computer Science from The Ohio State University. With 45 years of experience in Information Technology, I have worked in various industries, including academia, healthcare, technology sales, insurance, and national trucking. (Note: Experience answer from the Primary Voter Guide)

**Karlee Provenza (HD 45, D):**

**A:** Many lawmakers haven't worked hard for minimum wage, struggled to buy groceries, or gone without healthcare. But I have. While these struggles aren't something most people put on a resume, they continue to shape how I have worked on your behalf for the past four years as your State Representative. In addition to serving as your representative, I earned my Ph.D. at the University of Wyoming in 2021 and have published and presented research across the country on how we can improve our justice system to better serve our communities. Most importantly, I have applied that knowledge to advocate for justice here in Albany County as a community organizer for justice and as a policy maker writing and voting on legislation.

**Ocean Andrew (HD 46, R):**

**A:** My name is Ocean Andrew, and I am running for re-election in House District 46. I moved to Wyoming eleven years ago to experience the unique freedom this state offers. I am a father of three and the owner of a small business I started during college at the University of Wyoming, which now employs over 100 people across 19 states, with our headquarters and most salaried jobs in Albany County. My experience as an entrepreneur has shown me what it takes to create jobs and support small businesses. As a legislator on the education committee, I've focused on education reform, successfully advocating for parental choice and empowering teachers. I am committed to preserving Wyoming's culture and defending our liberties.

**Chris Lowry (HD 46, D):**

**A:** I'm Chris Lowry and I've lived in Wyoming nearly my entire life. I've raised my family, working and getting my education here. Working as a chemist has made me look for fact-based solutions to problems. Like most Wyomingites, issues such as access to public lands, and 2nd amendment rights are forefront of my concerns for our citizens. As a sportsman and avid outdoorsman, I am a staunch believer in our right to own firearms, as it is essential to the Wyoming way of life. It has been my lifelong belief that the public should have continued access to public lands, across the state. As a single father, I understand the importance of family, and stand firm with the women of this state in their right to make their own reproductive choices.

**Q What is your position on backfilling losses to cities and counties if property taxes are further reduced?**

**Ken Chestek (HD 13, D):**

**A:** Totally supportive of backfilling; this is a deal-breaker for me. Cities and counties provide essential services to their residents, and local governments know far better than the state what services are needed and how best to deliver them. Most municipal and county services are supported through property taxes, so blindly cutting those taxes without replacing that revenue from other sources would require unpredictable and unsustainable cuts to local government services. We need to support our local governments and allow them to serve their communities. A recent UW study showed that most Wyoming citizens would oppose cuts to local tax revenues if that meant a reduction in local government services.

**Joe Giustozzi (HD 14, R):**

**A:** The property tax reform I support, developed in consultation with our legislators by a Ph.D. who is chief economist and senior fellow at numerous think tanks around the country, turns restrained state spending (capped at 3.2%) and an historically accurate projection of Wyoming's general fund annual growth of 7.5% into a surplus that will be used reduce the property tax burden. There will be no need to backfill losses to cities and counties because this reform eliminates that need. The data shows that in ten years' time, the state general fund revenue will be sufficient to pay the entire school property tax for the entire state every year from then on. And even with state government spending caps, the state and schools will be fully funded.

**Trey Sherwood (HD 14, D):**

**A:** If, on top of the property tax refunds, 4% cap and exemptions we passed last session, we further reduce residential property taxes, the state must make our communities whole. Property taxes provide funding for essential services: our schools, hospitals, roads, police and emergency responders. To cut without replenishing would be in violation of our state constitution. Strong communities need diverse streams of revenue to provide basic amenities. If we remove a primary source of income, we must backfill losses from our savings, increase sales tax or enact an income tax. Tax reform should help hard working families achieve financial freedoms while providing stable income to local governments for the delivery of necessary services.

**Karlee Provenza (HD 45, D):**

**A:** Cities and counties fund essential services like hospitals, first responders, roads, and more. If the legislature were to cut property taxes, which pay for these important services, we must find ways to pay for them so communities have roads to drive on, ambulances to call on, and teachers for our schools. Unfortunately, using a backfill option will not last long unless we raise taxes elsewhere. Cutting property taxes would be fiscally irresponsible. Instead, we should increase property tax refunds so increased property tax payments don't harm hard working Wyomingites. Additionally, we should find more sustainable funding mechanisms like making large corporations pay their fair share for the government services they benefit from.

**Ocean Andrew (HD 46, R):**

**A:** I support eliminating property taxes while ensuring cities and counties can maintain essential services. Short-term backfilling with state funds may help, but long-term solutions should focus on removing barriers to economic growth and cutting wasteful spending. By fostering local economies and prioritizing efficiency, we can lower the tax burden without compromising critical services like public safety and infrastructure. This balanced approach ensures financial stability for both taxpayers and local governments, creating sustainable solutions that protect community needs while promoting economic prosperity.

**Chris Lowry (HD 46, D):**

**A:** Cities and counties rely on the legislature to fund their operating costs. It is disappointing that no ideas have advanced to solve this issue caused by the current funding model. Reducing services is not an effective solution to this problem that especially impacts Laramie and Albany County.

**Q: What should the legislature's role be in overseeing and managing the University of Wyoming and community colleges?**

**Ken Chestek (HD 13, D):**

**A:** The legislature needs to trust the administrators and faculty at both the University and the community colleges. The administration and faculty are the professionals in higher education who are best situated to deliver the high-quality education that Wyoming students, and the state in general, deserve. The practice of "legislating through footnotes" risks politicizing our institutions of higher education, which would be highly detrimental to the broad, science-based education the students deserve. Colleges and universities need to be places where students can encounter all sorts of new ideas so they can become critical thinkers, well-equipped to meet the new challenges they will face in our modern world.

**Joe Giustozzi (HD 14, R):**

**A:** The legislature's responsibilities with respect to the governance of the University of Wyoming is clearly delineated in the Constitution of the State of Wyoming and I will endeavor to ensure that the legislature fulfills those responsibilities.



**Trey Sherwood (HD 14, D):**

**A:** The legislature is compelled to make investments in education so our children, and communities, are prepared for economic opportunities. Through the budgeting process, we ensure students attending UW or a community college are set up for success. In allocating funds, we should put the needs of students first, support recruitment and retention programs, protect academic freedoms, require fiscal transparency, and ensure teachers and staff are well paid. However tempting, we should not micromanage programs we do not fully understand through budget footnotes. When we have honest, hard working leaders at UW and our community colleges, our only role should be providing funding to support education, job training and vocational programs.

**Karlee Provenza (HD 45, D):**

**A:** The legislature should continue to invest in higher education because doing so benefits communities across the state and helps set up our hard-working neighbors and their children for success. As wise investors, we should rely on experts in education to make decisions for these institutions that benefit students and faculty most. The legislature should have no say in curriculum or student programs. Unfortunately, I find fault in the structure of UW's Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees meets too often and lacks meaningful oversight and accountability to the state of Wyoming. I think we should consider how we can make the board of trustees more transparent and accountable to the communities they serve.

**Ocean Andrew (HD 46, R):**

**A:** The legislature should ensure the University of Wyoming and community colleges remain true to their mission by using the power of the purse responsibly. As a land-grant university, UW must provide accessible, economically beneficial education, foster research, and promote state economic growth. While I support institutional autonomy, it's vital that the legislature ensures UW stays on track with these goals. Proper oversight ensures financial accountability and guarantees that taxpayer dollars are used efficiently to maintain academic excellence and workforce development for Wyoming's benefit.

**Chris Lowry (HD 46, D):**

**A:** The legislature should encourage the success of UW and our community colleges. The UW Trustees and local college boards also play a role that affects the success of those institutions. The legislature should not micromanage every aspect of higher learning institutions in Wyoming. Diluting the quality of education at these institutions harms Wyoming and our future.

**Q: Bills specific to Wyoming issues, drafted by Legislative interim committees, have not been introduced due to other debates. What can be done?**

**Ken Chestek (HD 13, D):**

**A:** I believe this problem is related to the hyper-politicization of our public discourse. Too often one side simply demonizes the other side so that respectful and honest debate about real issues becomes impossible. For some, politics has become just another game where "winning" is everything, and public policy is neglected. What can be done? Voters need to

reject personal attacks by one candidate or party on another candidate. Voters need to think about the real issues and be willing to consider both sides, fairly presented. They should vote for candidates who demonstrate an understanding of all sides of an issue, and who reason based on facts. Vote for candidates who think for themselves, not kowtowing to some distant hyperpartisan group.

**Joe Giustozzi (HD 14, R)**

**A:** Under the leadership of the legislature that has held power for decades, committee bills have become less and less about the kitchen table issues that Wyoming citizens are dealing with and more and more about maintaining the status quo. Until each and every representative has an equal say in what the interim topics are, we should not expect committee bills to reflect the needs of our citizens, and those bills should be rejected until they do. I intend to be a “pay-check” legislator and represent the interests of my constituents. I refuse to be a “welfare-check” legislator who prefers to grow government at the expense of hard-working Wyoming citizens.

**Trey Sherwood (HD 14, D):**

**A:** We should not allow national headlines or fear based rhetoric to distract us from the problems facing hard working Wyomingites. Instead, we should focus our energies on the needs of our constituents as communicated to us at the door, over coffee, or at the ball game. Proposing legislation lock step with a national party platform, or what we see on divisive social media sites, will not solve Wyoming problems. Our citizens are concerned with everyday challenges; the cost of housing, the quality of their child’s education, access to healthcare, and securing a good job. Let’s set aside extreme partisanship that blocks what is best for Wyoming and focus our time and talents on delivering solutions to improve the daily lives of our constituents.

**Karlee Provenza (HD 45, D):**

**A:** There are many rules that make up the legislative process. These rules serve as important guides in protecting the democratic process, so I do not support changing the rules because committee bills have not made it through the difficult process of changing laws. The incoming legislature is more extreme than ever because less than 30% of eligible voters cast a ballot in the Primary Election. The solution is more people voting so the legislature reflects the people that live in our communities. Until the people of Wyoming are inspired to vote, the legislature will be run by people who are unwilling to solve real problems. Lawmakers should be invested in improving the lives of hardworking families, not doing what DC operatives want them to.

**Ocean Andrew (HD 46, R):**

**A:** The premise of the question is not entirely accurate. Other debates aren’t necessarily stopping the introduction of bills from interim committees. Just because a committee drafts a bill doesn't mean it's automatically a good bill or will have majority support. Each bill must go through the legislative process, including debate, amendments, and scrutiny. If it doesn't gain enough backing, it won’t advance. Delays aren’t due to other debates but rather whether the bill addresses Wyoming’s needs effectively and can secure broad legislative support.

**Chris Lowry (HD 46, D):**

**A:** Extremists have been able to disrupt the effective function of the interim committee's ability to deliver good solutions for issues in Wyoming. We could elect people that are more interested in solving problems in Wyoming than getting wrapped up in these other debates, though.

**Wyoming State Senate District 10**

**Information:** State Senators are elected to a four-year term with no term limits. Only even number Districts are up for election in 2024. The winner of SD 10 will join Chris Rothfuss (SD 9, D) whose term expires in 2026 representing Albany County. The Legislature meets in a General Session in odd numbered years, beginning on the second Tuesday of January. The General Session is limited to 40 legislative days. In even numbered years, the Legislature convenes in a Budget Session beginning on the second Monday of February, which typically lasts 20 legislative days. Except for the budget bill, all other bills require a two-thirds vote from the Senate or House for introduction during a Budget Session. Each Senator receives a minimum of \$300 per month base salary. They also receive \$150.00 per day while the Legislature is in session plus \$109.00 per day per diem. They receive pay for committee and work meetings between sessions. Each quarter they receive \$750 for a constituent service allowance. Minimum age is 25.

**Candidates:**

**Gary E Crum (SD 10, R)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 325, Laramie WY 82073

Campaign Phone: 307-399-0286

Campaign Email: GaryForWyoming@reagan.com

Facebook: Gary Crum

Campaign Website: GaryForWyoming.com

**Mike Selmer (SD 10, D)**

Mailing Address: 1462 Indian Hills Dr, Laramie WY 82072

Campaign Phone: 307-703-0024

Campaign Email: ILikeMike4SD10@gmail.com

Facebook: Mike Selmer for Wyoming Senate-10

Campaign Website: mikeselmer.com

**Q: Describe the education, experience, and skills that qualify you for this office.**

**Gary E Crum (SD 10, R):**

**A:** I am a Wyoming Native and have been a resident of Laramie for over 40 years. •Past CEO of Western States Bank, Headquartered in Laramie for 16 years and a 43-year banker. •Currently the Chairman of Ivinson Memorial Hospital Board of Directors, member of the National Board of the Boy Scouts of America and the Chairman of National Scouting Operations. •Past President of the Laramie Area Chamber of Commerce and Laramie

Economic Development Corporation, Laramie Lions Club, Ivinson Memorial Hospital Foundation, Cowboy Joe Club and the Wyoming Bankers Association. •Past Member - Wyoming State Board of Education and the Wyoming Banking Board. •Past Member American Bankers Association Governmental Affairs and Membership Committee •UW Graduate.

**Mike Selmer (SD 10, D):**

**A:** My work life was as a business owner and blue collar worker. I've been a master electrician, master cabinetmaker, and home builder. All these experiences contribute to my ability to work with others to solve complex problems in an efficient manor and get things done. I'm a cancer survivor and know first hand that our health care system needs fixing. I serve, or have served, on the boards of many non-profits and believe we all have a responsibility to make our communities better.

**Q: What is your position on backfilling losses to cities and counties if property taxes are further reduced?**

**Gary E Crum (SD 10, R):**

**A:** Cities and counties need to be engaged in the property tax reform process and the state's evaluation of the appropriate property structure. The funding of our cities and counties to run efficiently needs to be provided for in our property tax structure and cities and counties need to evaluate what spending can be reduced to help lower the tax burden on Wyoming citizens.

**Mike Selmer (SD 10, D):**

**A:** Every property owner relies on the services provided by our cities and counties. We must be willing and able to pay for those services, but targeted property tax relief to those who need it is important. Across the board cuts must be avoided and revenue losses need to be mitigated. It is the responsibility of our government at all levels to be efficient with our tax dollars.

**Q: What should the legislature's role be in overseeing and managing the University of Wyoming and community colleges?**

**Gary E Crum (SD 10, R):**

**A:** The legislature should be very active in reviewing and granting funding requests from the University of Wyoming and community colleges. Once the legislature approves funding requests, the body should ensure the monies are directed for the programs and operations that were requested and approved. The legislature should consider, and have accountability of, the awarded funds while making decisions for future requests from the University of Wyoming and the community colleges. The legislature should not get involved in day-to-day management of our state's higher education institutions.

**Mike Selmer (SD 10, D):**

**A:** The legislature must stop using the funding of the University of Wyoming as a political weapon. An independent university, managed by education professionals is important to

the economic and social well-being of our state. The legislature shouldn't micro-manage UW.

**Q: Bills specific to Wyoming issues, drafted by Legislative interim committees, have not been introduced due to other debates. What can be done?**

**Gary E Crum (SD 10, R):**

**A:** We need to ensure that all bills are reviewed by legislative leadership and prioritized correctly for introduction. The committee chairman, legislative bill sponsors, and citizens need to make sure they convey to legislative leadership the importance of a bill and completely understand the prioritization process.

**Mike Selmer (SD 10, D):**

**A:** The power of the "Freedom Caucus" has grown beyond its actual state-wide support. They are a road block to good governance and produce ideologically-driven, hot-button bills that don't benefit anyone. Electing people who will stand up to this is crucial. The ballot box is the path I see to solving this problem. The Secretary of State should be working to encourage voter registration, not making it harder to vote. If there are structural changes to the system that would help, I would be open to exploring them.

## **Wyoming U.S. House Representative**

**Information:** U.S. Representatives are elected to two-year terms, with no term limits. The annual salary for U.S. Representatives is \$174,000 per year plus some benefits; Congressional leaders receive more. An annual allowance is also provided to defray office expenses including staff. To be elected, a representative must be at least 25 years old, a United States citizen for at least seven years and an inhabitant of the state he or she represents. Wyoming has one U.S. Representative; states are apportioned based on population.

**Candidates:**

**Kyle G. Cameron (D)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 2598 Cheyenne WY 82003

Campaign Phone: 307-286-9906

Website: [www.cameronforwyoming.net](http://www.cameronforwyoming.net)

Campaign Email: [candidate@cameronforwyoming.net](mailto:candidate@cameronforwyoming.net)

**Harriet Hageman (R)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 4157 Cheyenne WY 82003

Campaign Phone: 307-209-4539

Website: [hagemanforwyoming.com](http://hagemanforwyoming.com)

Campaign Email: [info@hagemanforwyoming.com](mailto:info@hagemanforwyoming.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/harriethageman>

**Richard Brubaker (Libertarian)**

Campaign Email: brubakerforwy@gmail.com

Did not respond to questions prior to publication of this guide.

**Jeffrey Haggit (Constitution)**

Did not respond to questions prior to publication of this guide.

**Q: Describe the education, experience, and skills that qualify you for this office.****Kyle G. Cameron (D):**

**A:** With a robust background in stewardship, change management, and social sciences, I am well-equipped for the U.S. House of Representatives. My education includes a Master of Philosophy in Management from Walden University, focusing on the social basis of power, and a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership and Change from Colorado State University-Global, where I studied Kurt Lewin's Change Theory. I also hold a Bachelor of Science in Social Science from the University of Wyoming -CC. I have a strong track record of management, stakeholder engagement, and consensus-building. My interpersonal skills, conscientious decision-making, and dedication to democracy, continuous learning, and inclusion make me a qualified candidate.

**Harriet Hageman (R):**

**A:** I grew up on a ranch, attended Casper College on a livestock judging scholarship and received my bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Wyoming. As litigator for 34 years, I challenged federal overreach, protected water and property rights, exposed federal land and wildlife mismanagement, and fought back against the unconstitutional and unlawful acts of unelected bureaucrats. I have extensive experience engaging in complex trials against federal agencies and was admitted to practice in several states as well as the United States Supreme Court. In the 118th Congress, I was selected to serve on the Natural Resources committee, Chair the Subcommittee of Indian and Insular Affairs, and also serve on the Judiciary Committee.

**Q: What one piece of federal legislation would you support that would increase the quality of life for Wyoming citizens and how would it be beneficial?****Kyle G. Cameron (D):**

**A:** I support legislation like the Women's Health Protection Act of 2021 (H.R.3755), which aims to enhance the quality of life for Wyomingites by ensuring comprehensive access to reproductive healthcare. This act protects the right to abortion services nationwide, addressing inconsistent state laws that disproportionately affect women in rural and conservative states like Wyoming. Such legislation benefits Wyoming by improving healthcare access, reducing financial burdens from unplanned pregnancies, and supporting families and workforce participation. It empowers bodily autonomy and provides legal certainty for patients and providers. This legislation promotes equity, economic stability, and better health outcomes, enhancing the quality of life.

**Harriet Hageman (R):**

**A:** Every piece of legislation I have introduced, sponsored or co-sponsored is because I believe it will improve the lives of Wyoming citizens. Some of the top legislation includes: HR 1- to unleash our domestic energy, HR 2- the strongest border package to ever pass the House, HR 5- establishing the Parent's Bill of Rights. I co-sponsored bills to abolish the U.S. Department of Education and the Federal Reserve, I have introduced an amendment to defund the WHO, and I have taken every opportunity to protect life.

**Q: What ideas do you have for improving the federal immigration system?**

**Kyle G. Cameron (D):**

**A:** Improving the federal immigration system involves a multifaceted approach: Prioritize humanitarian leadership by addressing human rights, such as reunifying separated families. Enhance collaboration and diplomacy with international partners to tackle the root causes of migration and promote global stability. Balance border security with the humane treatment of migrants, ensuring policies accept human rights. Foster integration and inclusion by streamlining the naturalization process, promoting equality, and opportunity for all, reflecting the U.S.'s commitment to democracy and humanitarian values.

**Harriet Hageman (R):**

**A:** I have visited our southern border three times and the destruction and devastation is heartbreaking-local municipalities and hospitals are on the verge of bankruptcy trying to provide health care and basic services due to the constant barrage of illegals crossing the border everyday. This is no longer a border crisis, this is a humanitarian crisis- which was wholly avoidable and caused by President Biden rescinding Trump's remain in Mexico policy and violating U.S. law to pursue open borders. People wishing to immigrate into the United States should enter legally. We should focus on those individuals who provide a net benefit to our country in terms of education, qualifications, and willingness to assimilate.

**Q: Do you agree with the Bureau of Land Management adding conservation as the sixth use of federal land? Why or why not?**

**Kyle G. Cameron (D):**

**A:** Adding conservation as the sixth use of federal land is crucial for preserving natural habitats, protecting species, and maintaining biodiversity to combat climate change. It would ensure lands remain pristine for recreation and tourism, recognizing the importance of ecosystem services. Balancing conservation with existing uses like grazing and energy development is challenging but necessary for sustainable management. Any formal designation would require changes to existing laws and regulations, and it could help balance competing interests and prioritize environmental considerations.

**Harriet Hageman (R):**

**A:** The Bureau of Land Management's Conservation and Landscape Health final rule contradicts Congressional intent under the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976.

The BLM is acting outside the law to lock up OUR public lands. I co-sponsored legislation to withdraw this rule and am proud it was passed out of the House

**Q: What role should the U.S. play in protecting democracy outside our borders?**

**Kyle G. Cameron (D):**

**A:** The U.S. has a crucial role in promoting democracy globally due to moral responsibility, national security interests, and the pursuit of global stability. As a leading democracy, it has the duty to support democratic values, which align with freedom, human rights, and equality. Democracies are generally more stable and less prone to conflict, making the promotion of democracy abroad vital for reducing risks to U.S. security and fostering worldwide peace and prosperity. This effort also enhances U.S. credibility, supports humanitarian goals by protecting human rights, and builds stronger international relationships based on shared democratic norms.

**Harriet Hageman (R):**

**A:** We must evaluate foreign engagement by the threats to our own sovereignty unless in imminent danger.

## **Wyoming U.S. Senator**

**Information:** U.S. Senators are elected to a six- year term, with no term limits. The annual salary is \$174,000 with benefits and office. Senate leaders receive more. An annual allowance is also provided to defray office expenses, including hiring staff. To be elected, an individual must be at least 30 years old, a United States citizen for at least nine years and an inhabitant of the state he or she represents. The winner will join Wyoming Senator Cynthia Lummis (R) in representing Wyoming.

**Candidates:**

**John Barrasso (R)**

Campaign Mailing Address: PO Box 52008 Casper WY 82605

Campaign Phone: 307-234-0819

Campaign Email: gale@teambarrassowyo.com

Facebook: /barrassoformyoming

Campaign Website: Barrassoformyoming.com

**Scott D. Morrow (D)**

Campaign Mailing Address: 1767 Truman St Laramie WY 82070

Campaign Phone: 303-915-8012

Campaign Email: sdmorrow1@gmail.com

Campaign Website: MORROWTOMORROWFORUSSENATE.COM

**Q: Describe the education, experience, and skills that qualify you for this office.**



**John Barrasso (R):**

**A:** During my 24 years as an orthopedic surgeon in Casper, I served as President of the WY Medical Society and was named Physician of the Year. I've had decades of experience caring for our families and patients. Before serving in the U.S. Senate, I represented Natrona County in the WY State Senate. The Legislature trained me to effectively represent our interests and issues that matter most to our state. In the U.S. Senate, I'm proud of my strong, conservative record that puts WY first. I serve on committees that directly impact our energy industry, public lands, national parks, and trade. I've successfully promoted WY's economy and natural resources, strengthened our national security, cut wasteful DC spending, while cutting back regulations

**Scott D Morrow (D):**

**A:** My current constituency is members of the largest Retiree Chapter chartered by the American Postal Workers Union where I serve as President. My educational background after High School was working towards a degree in Liberal Arts and mathematics. I continue this endeavor today and currently have a GPA of 3.85. I have served as President and Director of Industrial Relations with the ninth largest local in the USA in the 1990's. I work as President of the Retiree Chapter, EEOC Rep, MSPB rep, SSDI rep, ADA rep and Medicare Appeals Advocate without charge and have been involved in these forums for over 40 years. I have worked closely with my Legislative Director and contacted ALL my WY Congressional members on a weekly basis.

**Q: What one piece of federal legislation would you support that would increase the quality of life for Wyoming citizens and how would it be beneficial?**

**John Barrasso (R):**

**A:** Whether it is coal, oil, or natural gas, Wyoming's energy powers the nation. The current administration has declared war on American energy. President Biden has put in place barriers and restrictions to stop energy production and development. It is hurting our economy and jobs in Wyoming. I support federal legislation to strike Washington's stifling energy regulations and to expedite the federal permitting process.

**Scott D Morrow (D):**

**A:** I have advocated for and supported both HR 82 in the US House and S 597 in the US Senate. The social security fairness act is a bill I have supported for decades. After 66 calls, Representative at Large, Harriet Hageman, did finally co-sponsor HR 82. Through my efforts and the efforts of others, there are currently over 300 co-sponsors of the social security fairness act in the House and over 51 co-sponsors of S 597 in the US Senate. Senators Barrasso and Lummis refuse to co-sponsor social security fairness despite my multiple pleas for them to do so. This legislation would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provisions and the Government Offset Provisions of the 1986 amendments to Social Security enacted during the Reagan Administration.

**Q: What ideas do you have for improving the federal immigration system?**

**John Barrasso (R):**

**A:** First and foremost, we need a president who will actually enforce the immigration laws already on the books. The open border policies of the Biden administration have turned every state into a border state, including Wyoming. Increased drug trafficking has contributed to fentanyl overdose deaths in Wyoming – doubling the number from five years ago. It’s unacceptable. We need to focus on solutions that will stop the flood of illegal immigrants and make our communities safer. That starts with building the wall, ending the outrageous catch-and-release program, and bringing back the Remain in Mexico policy.

**Scott D Morrow (D):**

**A:** I fully support the current bipartisan legislation in the US Senate, "Secure the Border Act" S 2824. NOT because it is perfect but because it meets my two top priorities. 1. More Border Patrol Agents (BPA). It is insurmountable to patrol our borders without adequate BPA staffing. 2. It is also very challenging to process asylum requests without enough judges to do so. The United States has a legal responsibility to adjudicate ALL asylum requests under domestic and international law. HR 2 that passed the House in this 118th Congress fails to meet these two top priorities of mine and focuses too much on "the wall". Unfortunately, folks who want to enter the USA illegally can go over or under any wall, as they do today.

**Q: Do you agree with the Bureau of Land Management adding conservation as the sixth use of federal land? Why or why not?**

**John Barrasso (R):**

**A:** In Wyoming, our livelihoods depend on preserving the health of our federal lands. We don’t need the Bureau of Land Management to mandate conservation – it’s always been a big part of everything we do. Wyoming landowners and leaseholders have proven to be the best stewards of the land. Despite our incredible track record, the Biden administration continues to roll out rules and plans aimed at turning Wyoming’s federal lands from “multiple-use” to “non-use.” The people of Wyoming depend on access to these lands for our livelihoods – including energy and mineral production, grazing, and recreation. I continue to lead the fight to stop this attack on our Wyoming way of life.

**Scott D Morrow (D):**

**A:** The Bureau of Land Management has issued its final rule for federal lands, putting conservation on equal footing with other uses such as mining and grazing in April of this year. Every American had the opportunity to express their opinions on this rule during the comment period provided prior to the final rule. My comments supported conservation being placed on equal footing with other activities like free grazing for factory farms on the backs of the US taxpayer and permits for mining that the taxpayers are asked to fund the clean up for. These are your lands and should be treated as such in lieu of giving cart blanche to large corporations to do with our lands as they please. Oil and gas companies and others MUST mitigate damages.

**Q: What role should the U.S. play in protecting democracy outside our borders?**

**John Barrasso (R):**

**A:** Our nation has a long history of supporting democracy and freedom around the world. Over the past few years, we have seen brutal dictators in Iran, Russia and China violently suppress the freedoms and rights of its citizens. We must continue to advocate for the American values that are the foundation of our country. I am committed to advancing the principles of democracy, protecting religious freedom and safeguarding liberty.

**Scott D Morrow (D):**

**A:** The United States of America should continue their centuries long practices of promoting and protecting democracy worldwide. History has taught us that allowing dictators to invade sovereign countries can lead to the death of innocents, including children, and wreak havoc for the entire globe. We do need to be more consistent in that endeavor since the hypocrisy of supporting dictators in many cases whilst besmirching other dictators in other situations sabotages our efforts to spread democracy. The funding to help Ukraine is absolutely necessary while allowing genocides to play out (currently in at least five countries) without attempts to stop such crimes against humanity is a sign of moral bankruptcy.

**Wyoming Judges up for Retention on the Albany County  
General Election Ballot**

**Justice of the Supreme Court - 8 yr**

**Kate M. Fox, John G. Fenn**

**Judges Of The Second Judicial District - 6 yr**

**Dawnessa A. Snyder, Melissa Westby**

**Circuit Court Second Judicial District Judge - 4 yr**

**Susan K. Stipe**

The League of Women Voters does not endorse or oppose candidates for judicial retention. To find out more about these judges, go to [www.wyomingbar.org](http://www.wyomingbar.org). Click on Judicial Branch FAQs. You will see 2024 Judicial Performance Assessments Results. You can click on the links for the Supreme Court, District Court and Circuit Court and select the justice or judge up for retention by name. You will be able to see each of their performance assessment results.

**Proposed Constitutional Amendment A**

**Ballot Language:**

**“The adoption of this amendment would separate residential real property into its own class of property for purposes of property tax assessments. The amendment would authorize the legislature to create a subclass of owner occupied primary residences.”**

**For Voters:** Vote ‘Yes’ to adopt or ‘No’ to not adopt on the Constitutional Amendment. Ballot issues must receive a majority “yes” of ALL who vote in the election to be successful.

**Pro:**

Passage of this amendment to the Wyoming Constitution would increase the possible classes of property to be taxed at different rates in Wyoming. Currently, the constitution requires that all property within a class be taxed at an equal rate and prohibits the legislature from creating new classes or subclasses. There are three main classes: 1) Gross production of mineral property, 2) industrial property, and 3) all others including real and personal. Included in the latter are subclasses for agricultural property and residential property. The legislature has proposed legislation to cut property taxes on residential homes. These failed and were probably unconstitutional since they didn’t apply to all homes. With this amendment, owner occupied primary residences could become a separate subclass and taxed at a different rate than rental or second homes.

**Con:**

The impact on tax revenue is difficult to determine because it is not possible to predict what the legislature will adopt; the amendment gives the legislature free reign to tax owner occupied primary residential property higher or lower than other residential property. Property taxes are what fund Wyoming schools and local governments, including all towns, counties and special districts. For instance, one recent proposed bill included an exemption for long-term homeowners that might have resulted in \$7M to \$9M less per year to schools and \$4M to \$5M less for local governments. The Legislature would need to replace these funds from other sources, or all school districts, towns, and counties would need to adjust to a considerable downturn in funding from the state and local property taxes. This amendment does not have a requirement that the owner live in the same primary residence for any minimum amount of time before being taxed differently, greatly increasing the number of properties subject to the new tax rate.