

County Candidate Forums

Pottawatomie County Economic Development Corporation (PCEDC) is pleased to [co-host forums with cities and chambers](#) within each of the districts electing a county commissioner. We'll ask a series of questions, allowing each candidate an equal amount of time to speak, taking turns as to who goes first. We wanted to be able to provide you with the questions in advance for you to prepare.

Additionally, we'd like to give you a platform to further your message by sharing these questions and your answers on [our website](#) and on [social media](#) after all of the County Candidate Forums have taken place. Please respond with your submissions and we'll post them to share with the community.

General Questions/ Prompts for All Candidates:

- Why are you running for office?
- What do you consider the biggest challenge of the position you are running for? What areas of county government need improvement and why?
- How long have you been a part of the Pottawatomie County community? To what extent have you been a part of local government in the county?
- Regarding your prospective position, what do you consider your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?
- It's no secret that Pottawatomie County has broad and diverse demographics and culture. Please describe how you intend to strike a balance and serve everyone in the county.
- What are your top priorities if you are elected?

Questions for County Commissioner Candidates:

- What is Pottawatomie County's role in spurring job creation?
- What should Pottawatomie County's relationship with other local governments (cities of Wamego, Onaga, St. George, Westmoreland, school boards) look like?
- What are your plans for preserving farm ground while also creating development opportunities and jobs throughout the county?
- Given Manhattan's continued expansion eastward, what should Pottawatomie County's relationship with the City of Manhattan look like?
- How would you approach the potential decommissioning of Jeffrey Energy Center?
- Please share your approach to crafting a budget for Pottawatomie County.
- What are your takeaways from the Pottawatomie County 2040 Plan? What stands out to you?
- A two-day training session by the Kansas County Commissioners Association (KCCA) will take place in Topeka for newly elected county commissioners. What will you hope to accomplish at that training?

Questions for County Sheriff and County Attorney Candidates:

- How would you describe your management style?
- How can we hire the best? How do we attract great candidates?
- People often wind up in the criminal legal system because they are struggling with substance use disorders and mental health issues. Is it appropriate for prosecutors, police and the courts to play a role in helping people with substance use disorders and mental health issues access care?
- Low-income people entering the legal system face barriers to getting out due to limited financial circumstances. Do you feel that high fines, fees, and financial assessments in the criminal and traffic court system have contributed to the “criminalization of poverty” where poor people face harsher outcomes for the same conduct as others due to their poverty? Why or why not?
- What is the number one crime-related issue that needs a plan of action and how will you address it?