

Greg Riat

General Questions/ Prompts for All Candidates:

- Why are you running for office?

I am running for re-election as County Commissioner to continue to make Pottawatomie County a great place to live, work and raise a family. I truly enjoy working for the people of our county. I started with Pottawatomie County in 1989 at the Sheriff's Office and am proud to still be serving here, now as County Commissioner. I will keep sharing my experience and knowledge and enjoy the relationships forged with the residents of our county. I am very fortunate to be in a position that I not only enjoy but look forward to doing.

- What do you consider the biggest challenge of the position you are running for? What areas of county government need improvement and why?

I think the most immediate problem facing the county commission is funding infrastructure for areas of the county that should or may be incorporated. This can be greatly helped by forming homeowner's associations or possibly by creating benefit districts. I don't believe this has to be a fight, and can understand not wanting to be incorporated, but solutions to this are needed so growth can continue in certain areas, without costing taxpayers across the county.

- 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?

I was born and raised in Pottawatomie County Kansas. I have lived in the rural Belvue area all my life, 60 years. I have no intention of ever leaving here. Local government: I volunteered for the Belvue Fire Department, then was later elected to a position on the Belvue Township Board. I was hired by Pottawatomie County Sheriff in 1989 and ran for Sheriff in 2000. I was elected that term and an additional 4 more terms as Sheriff. I did retire as Sheriff in 2019 and was elected by the Republican Precinct Committee for 1 year as County Commissioner, then was elected in 2020 for my first full term as County Commissioner.

- Regarding your prospective position, what do you consider your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?

Communication skills, prior budget experience, good listener, life experiences from farming, landowner, business owner, Sheriff and County Commissioner. I have also had the opportunity to work alongside people who possess great qualities and skills. I have learned much from these people and am grateful for those experiences.

Weaknesses: I need to write things down as it is hard to remember everything that goes on sometimes. Very fortunate to work with people at Pottawatomie County that give kind reminders at times of the different meetings or events that come up.

- 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.

- ***Knowledge of the area that you serve is important!***
- ***Maintain a professional working relationship with our other commissioners.***
- ***Consider the needs of the entire county.***
- ***Use good common sense***

County governments in Kansas have responsibility and guidelines. Staying within our guidelines and out of areas that we should not be involved in as a government will also keep balance.

- What are your top priorities if you are elected?

- 1. Responsible taxation that comes from responsible spending***
- 2. Make sure we look at Pottawatomie County as a whole area, not just certain areas***
- 3. Continuing needed projects that benefit our county and complete these projects timely***
- 4. Maintain good relationships with our county employees and elected officials as this is one of our greatest assets!***

Questions for County Commissioner Candidates:

- What is Pottawatomie County's role in spurring job creation?

Support business growth and jobs by maintaining fair and reasonable taxes. Provide good infrastructure such as roads and bridges. Having county staff that practices good customer service, integrity and relationships with both businesses and individuals. Support our emergency services to help with safe communities, lower insurance rates and a professional and competent response to emergencies.

- What should Pottawatomie County's relationship with other local governments (cities of

Wamego, Onaga, St. George, Westmoreland, school boards) look like?

One of mutual respect and cooperation. We must keep in mind that city government and county government each have their own responsibilities and may not always see things in the same light. Good communication and the ability to work together on certain projects makes for a strong relationship. We should have this relationship with all our cities, not just one or two.

- What are your plans for preserving farm ground while also creating development opportunities and jobs throughout the county?

Plan 2040 has clear boundaries as to where our growth areas should be. In the plan we protect certain areas of the county so it may stay as an agriculture asset. Plan 2040 lays out a good guideline to consider when planning. Keeping a good and active Planning and Zoning board is also important, we currently have that.

A county is best able to support development and jobs by maintaining good quality services. Roads and bridges kept up and improved, (an example of this would be the Belvue River Bridge being redone starting this fall). Professional staff that have positive relationships with business and community. Fire, Sheriff and EMS that keep us safe and secure in our homes and communities. Keeping taxes in check so business can not only survive, but also grow.

- Given Manhattan's continued expansion eastward, what should Pottawatomie County's relationship with the City of Manhattan look like?

The relationship should be one of cooperation when possible and mutual respect. This expansion can be difficult at times because of the different views and approaches by the respective commissions as well as the different responsibilities of a city and county. The fact is that we may not always agree with a given situation. I believe the Pottawatomie County Commission will always do what is best for Pottawatomie County. I am certain the City of Manhattan feels the same. We currently work with Manhattan on several platforms and work towards keeping a solid relationship.

- How would you approach the potential decommissioning of Jeffrey Energy Center?

I do not believe it will be decommissioned anytime in the next 20 years. When the time comes that they do phase out units, they will likely be done one at a time and replaced with a different type of energy production. Evergy representatives have attended the County Commission meeting and a spokesperson explained to us the difficulty of permitting and obtaining land for power generation of this size and type. He said there

will more than likely be some type of power generation at this location for years to come.

- Please share your approach to crafting a budget for Pottawatomie County.

Identify needs in the county by working with department heads, elected officials, and communicating with and hearing from the residents in our district. Look at property evaluation and see what it has done as well as sales tax numbers. It is always important to consider prior years budgets. Look to the future for the capital improvement plan as well as road repairing, road building and paving planning. Work with our county administrator and staff during work sessions to craft a budget that addresses our county's needs.

- What are your takeaways from the Pottawatomie County 2040 Plan?

Plan 2040 is a guideline that we can refer to for future growth and development. It is strong on protecting our Ag sector and farmland. As it states in the plan it is not a cure all, but a framework to help us with future growth. I think it is a good document developed with the help from our residents of Pottawatomie County.

- What stands out to you?

There are many good points of the plan, probably what stands out is the detail and the depth that was done.

- 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?

I have served 5 years as a county commissioner and most likely will not be attending this training.