

JH News & Guide Primary Campaign Questionnaire – Carlman responses in blue

Why are you running?

In 2012, our community adopted this vision:

“Preserve and protect the area’s ecosystem in order to ensure a healthy environment, community and economy for current and future generations.” That is exactly the right vision. It is also a tall order. Making it happen requires leaders with long and deep local and Wyoming experience in conservation and community well-being. With 41 years of community service in Teton County and a lifetime of advocacy for the conservation of our environment, I can help. County government oversees a wide range of services: the list includes and goes beyond planning and zoning, housing and use of SPET monies, roads and pathways, parks and recreation, weed and pest, water and sewer, libraries and fire protection, mental health and indigent care, fairgrounds and fairs, GIS and mapping, building inspection and code enforcement. My 28-year career as a Wyoming lawyer, all of it spent in Teton County, gives me a valuable toolkit for understanding and guiding local government. It would be easy for a county commissioner to get too caught up in the administration of services and pay too little attention to advocacy for Jackson Hole. We need commissioners who are, as I am, skilled at working with our partners at the US Forest Service, National Park Service, State of Wyoming and others. I’ll keep advocacy for Teton County high on my list of things to do. I will make sure county government rises to the challenge of stewarding our best interests in the complicated and sometimes challenging larger social, economic, legal and political environment. I’ll aim for a balance of actions and policies that is grounded in what makes Jackson Hole worth fighting for.

What is Your Occupation?

28 years and counting as a Wyoming lawyer, all of it spent in practice in Teton County, has given me insights into the lives of local businesses and the needs of our people. I've helped people who were at the very lowest moments of their lives, and I've helped hundreds of others who were excited to launch new businesses and buy their first homes. As a lawyer and a volunteer, I've pushed for adoption of Land Development Regulations that help us live compatibly with wildlife. I've also been a dinner waiter at Dornan's (1979-80), a river shuttle driver and Snake River Canyon whitewater guide, (1981-86), part-time wood boat scenic guide (2018-23); before I was a lawyer, for nine years I was a non-profit staffer and

executive director, and even a balloon delivery person in a gorilla suit. My best job has been being a dad to Madeline and Reed. It adds up to a well-rounded grounding in the life of our community.

How are you involved in the community?

I'm a 22+ year member of the Rotary Club of Jackson Hole, including past president, Rotarian of the Month and Rotarian of the Year. I'm one of six volunteer board members who led the charge to save Hungry Jack's General Store and keep it alive as a thriving community owned business. I'm on the statewide board of the Wyoming Community Foundation, helping people in all corners of our state build a better Wyoming. I was the chairman of the board of the Old Wilson Schoolhouse Community Center; we saved it from the wrecking ball and restored it to the vibrant place it is today. I served two years on the Teton County Natural Resources Stakeholders Group devising LDRs intended to put muscle behind our vision for protecting our environment. I'm a founding member of Friends of the Bridger-Teton. In 2008, I received a service award from the Wyoming State Bar, largely for my dedication to representing indigent people who were in the midst of severe mental health crises. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department gave me a service award for my first-in-Wyoming legal work to protect wintering wildlife and local people from the harm of ill-advised private feeding menageries. I'm a past president, vice-president and treasurer of the Teton County Bar Association. I served four years on the board of Jackson Hole's first non-profit daycare center, the Community Children's Project. I'm on the advisory board of Friends of Pathways and served many years on the advisory board of the Teton Raptor Center. I was on the leadership board for the successful Snake River Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. My wife, Anne Ladd, and I raised two fine children in Jackson Hole. Madeline is now 27; Reed is 24. I see our community through their eyes too.

What are the top three biggest issues facing Teton County?

Conservation issues are always vital in Jackson Hole. Our community's vision statement gets it right when it declares, "Preserve and protect the area's ecosystem in order to ensure a healthy environment, community and economy for current and future generations." We need to fix the drinking water disaster at Hoback Junction. The eutrophication of Fish Creek in Wilson and the persistence of failed septic systems in our high groundwater setting need correction. Completion of conservation actions at the Kelly and Munger Mountain State Land parcels are essential. The roster of conservation issues changes from year to year, but

the magic of Jackson Hole and the vitality of our economy depend on protecting the extraordinary gifts of mother nature.

Affordable housing is a hard and serious challenge. Our community has embraced the challenge through deed-restricted, income qualified housing. We need to do more. Keeping at least 65% of the local workforce housed locally is essential to public safety, economic prosperity, and community integrity. I'm proud of local voters' choices in 2022 to direct \$80 million in SPET funding to all five housing support initiatives that were on that ballot. I'll work with local housing non-profits and the Jackson Teton County Housing Department to put that money to good use. I'll look for additional policies to slow the demand for housing.

Despite decades of warnings from all manner of **transportation** plans and planners, we've done a lousy job of planning for our transportation needs in Jackson Hole. I live in Wilson; as every commuter from Idaho knows, and every local who uses Highway 22 also experiences, life at "Service Level F" is a stop and go drag. Fixes: HOV Lane on 22; Transit Center at Stilson; fare-free riding on key routes at high-demand times; more commuting by bike.

Is Teton County headed in the "right direction" on housing? Why or why not?

We are headed in the right direction because we have elevated affordable housing to a huge priority, and, since 2001, we have committed more than \$102.7 million in public funding toward it. We have legal mechanisms in place to protect the public's investment in affordable housing in perpetuity, and we have a joint Town and County Housing Department and volunteer board that we can be proud of. We have strong non-profit partners, and a local hospital and school district that are literally digging in to provide housing for essential workers. We can do more with policies that prefer affordable housing over workforce housing, and that prefer both of those to open market housing. We need to look at the demand side of the equation as well. For example, big new hotels generate demand for lots of low-wage workers who are not going to be able to live here, so we need to tighten our land use planning controls over new hotel and other commercial development.

Why do you support/oppose SPET for the courthouse?

I strongly support SPET funding for a new courthouse. The current courthouse is not seismically safe. As leading geologists have advised us for a long time, big mountains have big earthquakes, and the Tetons are very big mountains. It is not acceptable to have our sheriff's department and our dispatchers crushed under three stories of earthquake rubble, but that's what we're risking every day with the current courthouse. We require jurors,

judges, lawyers, litigants, clerks and law enforcement to occupy an unsafe and dysfunctional building. The 1968 Teton County Courthouse needs to be knocked down. A new one must be built. SPET funding lets visitors pay ~60% of the cost; visitors benefit from our systems of justice just like locals do. SPET funding will save us scores of millions of dollars in avoided financing costs. It's the smart way to fund a project of this scale.

What should the Board of County Commissioners do to improve transportation?

About 35 years ago, I was in a transportation planning meeting in Jackson where a wise old-timer, a descendant of Uncle Nick Wilson, said, "Well, if we don't want new roads, we're going to turn our existing roads into big ones." And here we are. Four lanes on South Highway 89. Major expansion of Highway 22. A sophisticated traffic demand management program between Stilson and Teton Village. It's an odd notion for a wild country haven like Jackson Hole to employ basically urban transportation planning methods, but, given the simplicity of our arterial road system and the increasing demands our ever-growing local and visiting population put on it, we need to adopt urban transportation solutions. The key near-term pieces are investments in HOV lanes on Highway 22, a Stilson Transit Center that's built for the future, START bus fare and route choices that make moving around in a START bus faster and better than putting another single-occupancy car on the road, and, a new east-west connector road to absorb some of the additional traffic that will originate in the upcoming Northern South Park development. The commissioners also have to avoid losses; the pathway between the Snake River Bridge and Skyline Ranch may not fit inside an expanded roadway, so working out a smart new easement on adjacent ranch property is going to be important. That pathway is already carrying significant spring-summer-fall e-bike commuter traffic. It's going to get more use in the future. Ongoing investments in safe bicycle and pedestrian movement will lower the demands on our roads and improve local health and happiness.

The town and county have been negotiating how they fund joint departments, which include START, Jackson Hole Fire/EMS, Parks and Rec and the Housing Department? What would be your approach to those negotiations and what's your philosophy on funding public services?

Joint departments often make sense because they avoid the duplication of services. My approach to the funding of joint departments would be to start with a bias in favor of cooperation, get appropriate expert advice about available cost savings for new joint operations, make that advice public, test it in the court of public opinion through the usual meeting and hearing processes, and see where those experiences lead us. Whether it's

more or less true, I've heard and read enough, for long enough, about unhealthy antagonism between Town and County governments to make ending the antagonism a priority. I can help with that by elevating civility in everything our local governments do in their conduct of the public's business.

I hope to save philosophy for questions that are different from funding public services, but I do have some beliefs. The first one comes from my parents, including my Hinsdale, Illinois Village Manager father, who so appreciated the spirit President Kennedy voiced when he said, "Let the public service be a proud and lively career. And let every man and woman who works in any area of our national government...at any level, be able to say with pride and with honor in future years: 'I served the United States government in that hour of our nation's need.'" Teton County invests most of its annual budget in people; we'll all be better off if we expect, honor, and respect good work from public employees. The second one comes from my college education, where I learned about and came to embrace the idea of a social contract that says we are all in this together. The third belief comes from my father-in-law, an economist, who taught me to take the long view about just about everything.

What should change about Teton County's approach to managing water quality?

The Teton County Water Quality Management Plan has been approved; now it needs to be engaged. The \$200/septic system pumping rebate from Protect Our Water Jackson Hole is a great pilot project; it will help us learn if it's the price of septic system maintenance that's contributing to the persistence of failing systems, or if it's something else. Increased awareness of the Teton County Health Department's drinking water quality testing program will generate additional testing and better attention to at-risk water sources. Teton County's Small Wastewater Facility regulations are a good start, but they only apply to new septic systems. Too many old ones are still doing a bad job of treating black water. They are putting our Snake River Sole Source Aquifer at unacceptable risk. Teton County needs to continue to be a staunch champion of necessary clean water sources and dirty water management systems at Hoback Junction. Having some Hoback residents depending on trucked-in drinking water, as is now the case for too many of them, is not ok.

What question do you wish voters would ask?

What can local, state and federal government agencies do to reverse the over-supply of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere? That question belongs in front of everyone because it's going to take all of us to protect the balance of life that now makes our planet a good and habitable place.