

Election 2018

Profiles of Candidates

State Legislature

Saline County Commission



Prepared by:
Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

The Salina Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to make available these candidate profiles for **State Legislature and Saline County Commission**.

As the leading business organization in Salina, the Chamber takes a vital interest in local elections, most importantly, the candidates running for office and the issues facing our community.

The Chamber feels it is extremely important to inform you of the candidates, their background, past experience, their reason(s) for seeking public office, and their priorities if elected.

In addition, the Chamber and League of Women Voters are sponsoring a Candidates Forum prior to the general election November 6. **It will be held Thursday, October 25, 6:30-7:30pm, in the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce Visit Salina Annex, 120 W. Ash.** It will feature local candidates in the only contested race for the State Legislature from the 69th District. The forum offers a great opportunity to meet the candidates, become familiar with the key issues, and ask questions. It is free and open to the public.

We hope the information is helpful, and we want to encourage you to vote November 6th.

The information on each candidate was reproduced by the Chamber exactly as it was received from the candidates. No corrections were made for spelling and/or grammar. The original questionnaires are on file at the Chamber office, 120 W. Ash.



State Legislature

69th District

Name: J.R. Claeys

Address: 2157 Redhawk Ln, Salina, KS USA 67401

Phone Number: 785-250-5758

Email: jr@claeys.com

Campaign Treasurer: Mark Hassman

Phone: 785-827-6750

Occupation: Self-Employed

Work History: • Kansas House of Representatives, District 69
• Self-Employed, Nonprofit Management Consultant

Most recent political and/or community experience/elected office(s) held:

- Kansas House of Representatives, District 69 Representative 2013-2019
- Chairman, Committee on Transportation & Public Safety Budget
- Vice Chairman, Joint Committee on State Building Construction
- Vice Chairman, Special Committee on State Hospitals
- House committee on Appropriations
- House committee on Commerce, Labor & Economic Development
- Kansas UAS Joint Task Force
- Kansas Transportation Vision Task Force
- Kansas Republican Party State Executive Committee Member
- Chairman of the Kansas Young Republicans

I am seeking public office because:

Born and raised in Salina, I know my hometown is a great place to live, work and raise a family. I want for my family and yours the same opportunities I had growing up here. Great schools, a sense of community, and a path to succeed. We need quality schools, both primary and secondary, and excellent technical education to fill the jobs that our community can grow with limited regulation and low taxes.

If elected, the top three issues/positions I will advocate are:

- High-quality public schools that prepare our students for College, Career and Life. Tech schools, colleges and universities that are affordable for Kansas students.
- A comprehensive transportation program that maintains our nationally-ranked highway system to the standards we expect.
- Growing industry in Salina to provide premium-wage jobs for our skilled labor force.

State Legislature

69th District

Name: Gerrett Morris

Address: 117 N. College Ave., Salina, Kansas United States 67401

Phone: 785-643-3268

Email: gerrett.morris34@gmail.com

Campaign Treasurer: Janice Morris

Phone: 785-822-4296

Occupation: Horticulture Manager Rolling Hills Zoo

Work History: Total Turfcare 1998-99

Rolling Hills Zoo 1999-present

Founding Partner Ad Astra Books and Coffee House 2011-2016

Most recent political and/or community experience/elected office(s) held:

Site Council; Cottonwood Elementary School. -Present

Saline County Master Gardeners -Present

Salina Tree advisory board

Salina Area Tech Horticulture Advisory Board.

Falun Lutheran Church Council.

Saline County Program Development Committee.

I am seeking public office because:

The 69th district is a very diverse district geographically and economically. I do not believe it is being represented well at this time. I've spent the summer knocking on doors. Voters are tired of political games being played with school funding and Medicaid expansion. I intend to speak on behalf of the folks in this district.

If elected, the top three issues/positions I will advocate are:

1) Public School Funding

2) Transportation and Infrastructure

3) Medicaid Expansion

State Legislature

71st District

Name: Rep. DIANA DIERKS

Address: 1221 SUNRISE DR

Phone: (Day) 785-820-7504
(Evening) 785-820-7504

Email: dierks@salinahomes.com

Campaign Treasurer: GORDON HORST

Phone: _____

Occupation: REAL ESTATE BROKER

Work History: FORMER DAIRY FARMER - 10 YRS MARKETING
DIRECTOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE PUBLICATIONS
20 YEARS REAL ESTATE BROKER

Most recent political and/or community experience/elected office(s) held:

(3) TERMS KS. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
71ST DISTRICT, SALINA Bldg. ADVISORY BOARD

I am seeking public office because:

① Adequate Funding for Education Education Comm. Vice Chair
MAKING SURE THAT THE NEEDS OF MY
CONSTITUENTS ARE MET. VERY IMPORTANT TO KEEP
A WATCHFUL EYE AS TO THE BENEFITS OR
CONSEQUENCE OF EVERY BILL PRESENTED. THE
BENEFITS MUST OUTWEIGH THE CONSEQUENCE.

If elected, the top three issues/positions I will advocate are:

1. Adequate Funding for Education
2. Medication Expansion - Services for
The elderly & those in need are available.
3. IDOT - MAKING SURE OUR HIGHWAYS
ARE MAINTAINED - Keeping Jobs in Kansas.

Diana Dierks
Signature

State Legislature
108th District

Name: Steven Johnson

Address: 10197 S. Hopkins Road, Assaria, KS

Phone: (Day) 785-829-0319
(Evening) Same

Email: stevenj@hometelco.net

Campaign Treasurer: Kermit Dorf

Phone: _____

Occupation: Farmer

Work History: 1988-2013 - Ameriprise Financial, several positions with investment advice and products. Final title - Sr. Region U.P.
?? - Present - Farm, South Saline County, KS

2011 - Present - State Representative

Most recent political and/or community experience/elected office(s) held:

State Representative, District 108

Chair - House Tax Committee

Vice Chair - Joint Committee on Pensions and Benefits

I am seeking public office because:

To continue to direct the state toward a balanced budget.

To bring respectful dialogue among the players on the public stage.

If elected, the top three issues/positions I will advocate are:

1. Fiscal ~~Responsibility~~ Responsibility, Balanced Budget
2. Progress Funding KPERs, Reduce reliance on debt
3. Rural Kansas and agriculture related issues, rural and ag economic development.

Steven C Johnson
Signature

Saline County Commission

1st District

Name: Monte Shadwick

Address: 709 Highland Ave, Salina, Kansas United States 67401

Phone Number: 785-827-6761

Email: office@blueskyebrewery.com

Campaign Treasurer: none

Phone: none

Occupation: Owner-Blue Skye Brewery and Eats

Work History: Professor at Kansas Wesleyan University
Staff Member for Congressman Jerry Moran

Most recent political and/or community experience/elected office(s) held:

Current County Commissioner

Past City Commissioner and Mayor

I am seeking public office because:

To work with the current commissioners to continue with the progress and positive changes made these last 2 years on making the county commission more respected, efficient, open and accountable.

If elected, the top three issues/positions I will advocate are:

1. Continue to work with the city commission in a professional manner in solving our common concerns.
2. Implement the innovative ways being proposed by the Jail Reduction Committee to reduce jail population.
3. Find a common sense solution with the Expo Center lease extension in the current location

Saline County Commission

4th District

Name: James (Jim) Weese

Address: 4971 W. West Slope Rd., Salina, KS USA 67401

Phone Number: 785 309-5825

Email: jim.weese@saline.org

Campaign Treasurer: Erin Hecker

Phone: 785 819-1889

Occupation: Retired Salina Fire Department

Work History: I spent 34 years in the fire service retiring as a Battalion Chief. Co-owned Bugle Builders doing general construction.

Most recent political and/or community experience/elected office(s) held:

I am currently serving a two year term as a county commissioner.

I am seeking public office because:

I wish to continue my work addressing many of the current needs of the county. The past two years have seen a great improvement in the working relationships between city/county elected officials. With a good working environment many problems can and will be resolved in the near future.

If elected, the top three issues/positions I will advocate are:

Jail population

Expo Center

County road infrastructure

Saline County Commission

5th District

Name: Mike White

Address: 2997 N Muir Rd, Salina, KS USA 67401

Phone Number: 785-827-8276

Email: mike.white@saline.org

Campaign Treasurer: Kathryn K White, CPA

Phone: 785-827-9902

Occupation: Buffalo Rancher

Work History: Self-employed and Kansas Department of Transportation

Most recent political and/or community experience/elected office(s) held:

Saline County Commissioner from 1991 to 2007 and 2017 to 2018.

Pleasant Valley Township Committeeman

I am seeking public office because:

County government is the most open and accessible form of government. I enjoy working with my constituents and applying solutions to problems. There are unique challenges and responsibilities in the role of commissioner.

If elected, the top three issues/positions I will advocate are:

1. Jail overcrowding

Saline County spends over a million dollars a year housing our prisoners in other counties. This issue needs to be dealt with without building a new jail.

2. Roads and bridges

The constant upkeep and maintenance that is required on our roads and bridges is a daily concern that affects everyone in Saline County.

3. Expo Center

Our aging facility is in dire need of remodeling or replacement. The outcome will depend on the taxpayer's wishes and the financing.