



**LEE  
FILER (D)**



**LINDA  
HEATH (R)**



**GUNNAR  
MALM (R)**



**TROY  
THOMPSON (R)**

**Q: Why are you the best candidate?**

I'm the only candidate with experience, understanding of and relationships in state government. The commissioners are always dealing with state government on funding for emergency management, drug and DUI courts, "over the cap" funding, new programs for quitting tobacco, and courtroom requirements.

I believe my willingness to work directly with citizens to help them resolve issues involving government is an asset. This has helped me continue to grow as a commissioner and become more effective and knowledgeable of the concerns of the residents of Laramie County.

I have deep roots in eastern Laramie County, and I am a small-business owner, resident and Realtor in Cheyenne. I have experienced firsthand the challenges both businesses and individuals encounter in Laramie County. I have the vision to ensure our community remains a great place for all residents.

I have the education, experience and ability to be the leader that Laramie County needs. As a veterinarian and small-business owner for the past 20 years, and a commissioner for the past eight years, I have the experience needed to make intelligent, rational decisions based on honest family values.

**Q: What would be your No. 1 priority in office?**

Improve the relationship with the state by representing everyone in Laramie County – not just the parties, but the people in the middle. Continue to be involved with state boards, such as the Governors' Council on Developmental Disabilities.

I will continue to be vigilant regarding regulations and state statutes. We must have realistic planning for future growth, balancing the private property rights for people and industry while promoting the health and safety of our citizens.

My top priority will be infrastructure. First, I'll see that all existing infrastructure is in good working order and properly maintained. Second, I'll explore securing access to opportunities like high-speed internet all over Laramie County so all residents, urban and rural, can compete in the 21st century economy.

To continue to manage Laramie County in a fiscally conservative manner. Over the past eight years, we have been able to build our reserves to the point where we were able to self-finance the jail expansion and the courthouse remodel. This was possible through maintaining a conservative budget.

**Q: Do you support using county money to attract or subsidize air service here? If so, why? If not, why not? Do you – or would you – have any conditions?**

Absolutely. There are no Wyoming public transportation projects that are not subsidized at some point. Whether it's buses, roads, rail or air, we cannot bring them to our county without government help. With the right plan, we can keep costs down and hopefully break even at some point. My conditions would be whether the county has the funds and how long the county would have to help until an operation can be self-funding.

If we refuse to invest in ourselves, why should anyone else invest in our community? We have many business executives traveling and military members who travel here from across the country; they consider travel time as money in the bottom line. My preference for air service is daily business flights (such as the announced American Airlines flight to Dallas/Fort Worth), rather than a recreational flight that would only fly to Phoenix or Las Vegas.

No one likes the word "subsidy" except those receiving one. It is more financially responsible to take reasonable steps in attracting a carrier than letting an asset, like the new terminal, sit underutilized. The potential economic benefits of having reliable air service in our community are to be seriously considered.

I voted in favor of this for ... the economic development benefit of having air service and ... the return on investment of the minimum revenue guarantee (MRG). This return could be up to 2.5 times depending on the airline and the flight schedule. The condition would be the ability to afford the MRG in the county's budget. I will not vote for an MRG at the expense of employees and essential services.

**Q: How would you handle oil and gas development, which some residents say is encroaching on their way of life?**

Oil and gas development is controlled at the state level. As the only candidate with experience as a state elected official, I would work with the state Oil and Gas Conservation Commission and improve the relationship between the oil and gas industry, the state and the residents of Laramie County. This might be done with a ballot initiative for larger setbacks, buffer zones or abatement procedures.

Oil and gas development is controlled by the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. The county doesn't control the permitting process for wells. The county manages road usage and has posted several roads with lower speed limits for oil field traffic. While this doesn't mitigate the full impact of the oil and gas development, the county is very limited in what it can do both from statutory controls and financially to address the roads.

The Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission is the body responsible for permits and extraction within Laramie County. The County Commission's role is limited to items such as obtaining road maintenance agreements and making sure applicants are conducting business responsibly and being "good neighbors." I do not believe it is the role of a commissioner to go before the commission and argue on the behalf of residents or industry.

The state of Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission is responsible for oversight of oil and gas development. However, our commission has provided two essential functions. The first is establishing road-use agreements with the oil producers to solicit their help in maintenance. The second is facilitating communication between producers and the community through our quarterly meetings.

**Q: How would you handle land-use disputes like those over a proposed shooting range near Hillsdale and a gravel pit in Granite Canon?**

I do not believe in having the government take away the rights of a private landowner. I would not be in favor of zoning in the county or allowing the many to infringe on the rights of the few. Businesses and private citizens have the same rights to use their land as they choose. I would address concerns about safety and environmental damage through county development rules and regulations.

I will continue to be vigilant regarding regulations and state statutes. We must have realistic planning for future growth, balancing the private property rights for people and industry while promoting the health and safety of our citizens. Both could be dealt with by zoning the entire county; however, that leads to limiting private property rights for everyone.

The attraction of living near large sections of undeveloped land also comes with risks; you never know what the weather might do or what your neighbor might build. I don't believe we need countywide zoning or spot zoning. The only reason I see for limiting private use is when it is a public safety concern.

I am a proponent of private property rights, and I have consistently voted that way throughout my eight years in office. I am not in favor of countywide zoning, as I believe this limits our rights. Our job as commissioners is not to prevent people from using their land, but to help mitigate the negative impacts to neighbors through our land-use regulations.

**Q: The city of Cheyenne required department heads to individually present and explain their budget in public sessions this year. Do you think the county should do the same? If so, why? If not, why not?**

No. I like the current process. It would not be prudent to attempt to micro-manage every budget. The county reviews all budgets at several meetings. Commissioners have early opportunities to request explanation on line items or details, and meetings are always open to the public. The final budget is also made available to the public.

Commissioners meet with department managers and elected officials to examine their budgets at meetings that are open to the public. This year, we met in a joint meeting, which was very well received. Each budget was discussed, any questions the commissioners had were answered, and changes were made at that time. We build the budget toward the low end of projected revenues, which makes it easier to keep the proposed budget well within revenue projections.

I was one of the many residents who watched the presentations made by directors at the city level intently. Transparency in government is an essential component to fiscal responsibility. The county budget is large and can be daunting for citizens to navigate, interpret and learn from, so I believe a system like one recently used by the city could be beneficial to not only the public, but also commissioners and directors.

All of the meetings with our department heads are public meetings, whether discussing the budget or otherwise. All of the meetings with our finance department in the County Clerk's Office are public meetings. Every discussion the commission has regarding the budget is a public meeting. Our budget is published on our website. The county budget process is done as openly and as transparently as possible.

**Q: What do you think is the present commission's greatest achievement? What's been its biggest missed opportunity?**

Its greatest achievement is the creation and passing of the sixth-penny projects. This commission has found a way to fund them before the collection to reduce costs and get those projects underway. This was done while balancing the biggest budget ever. The biggest missed opportunity was leaving the Christensen Road overpass project to Cheyenne. Both the city and the county could have started it, but the city took it and, with delays and red tape, it's going to cost citizens more than the amount budgeted.

We built county reserves to the point we could self-finance the courtroom remodel and detention center expansion, saving the taxpayers \$1 million to \$2 million in interest; reorganized Planning/Development with a unique public/private partnership; completed overdue update of Comprehensive Land-Use Plan, currently modifying county land-use regulations; upgrading facilities at Clear Creek Park; added playground and RV camping at the Archer Complex; built a CNG fill station at Public Works using natural gas produced in Laramie County; and much more.

The current commission's decision to hire an owner's representative to manage and handle the day-to-day execution of numerous large county projects has helped to keep things on schedule and on budget, and has prevented the commission from micro-managing approved projects. I think the current commission functions pretty well, but I would like to see more effort put into employee retention. Particularly in the areas of public safety, such as law enforcement and emergency response, Laramie County cannot afford to lose out on its own investment in quality personnel by not taking the steps necessary to keep them.

The greatest achievement: Digitizing our meeting materials and live-streaming and video archiving our meetings. By doing this, we have made Laramie County government transparent and available to everyone. Missed opportunity: The grouping of projects on the last sixth-penny ballot. This led to many critical infrastructure projects not passing. As the county's liaison to the ballot committee, this is more on me than the entire commission, but it is a mistake I will not make again.