



Joyce White for Bishop Paiute Tribal Council

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Joyce White Responses to the Bishop Paiute Voters Initiative 2020 'Questions to Candidates'

Question 1: What do you want your fellow Tribal Voters to most understand about you?

- First and foremost, I have integrity and I will not compromise on that. I am honest and compassionate – a nice person but by no means am I a pushover. I have a sense of fair play. I will always stick up for the downtrodden and those with no voice. I absolutely will not tolerate bullying. I am not afraid to take a stand even if it means that I am the only one doing so.

Question 2: What are the top three issues you see that Tribal Council needs to address?

- **Issue #1: Transparency and Accountability** – the Tribal Council must act in the best interests of the Tribe and listen to the concerns and issues raised by all tribal members, *not just a select few*. It must keep tribal members fully informed so the General Council can hold the Tribal Council accountable.
- **Issue #2: Separation of Powers** – we must ensure that there is a clear separation of powers between the Tribal Council and the Tribal Court. The Court must be allowed to make its decisions without any undue influence.
- **Issue #3: Recognition of Tribal Employees and Protection of Their Rights** – there has been a lot of turnover of tribal employees. It is time to take a deep and honest look as to what is causing such turnover and do something about it. The Tribe cannot afford to keep losing employees. We need to recognize their contributions and provide them the training they need to succeed.

Question 3: What do you see as our Tribe's biggest problem right now and how would you address it?

- I would say that it is a lack of trust and respect for the Tribal Council. The Council must earn the trust and respect of those that they are leading. Otherwise, they will not be able to bring along tribal members when the Tribal Council is tackling major issues. This goes to the whole transparency issue.

Question 4: Would you still run for Tribal Council if the pay rate was dropped drastically and you had to hold other employment?

- Absolutely. As I have previously stated, I am not running for any monetary benefits that come with the office. I have been blessed in my life and I feel it is my duty to give back to our community. I truly want the Tribe to succeed and prosper.



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Question 5: With drug use and abuse as such a significant problem on the reservation, how would you try to tackle that complex issue?

- This is an issue that has touched everyone on the reservation. We are a village of people and we all need to look out for and take care of each other. Drug use and abuse is a significant problem and the recidivism rate for those seeking treatment is very high. I believe the answer toward addressing the issue is to build a Recovery Treatment Center here on the reservation, which incorporates traditional wellness programs. As I have previously stated, if we hope to see our loved ones successfully recover, we need to provide them with the tools and resources to do so here at home.

Question 6: How do you think we can help our members who don't qualify for housing/TANF or other programs?

- There is a major housing shortage on the reservation. We need to look at acquiring more land, so our people are not forced to move off of the reservation. We also need to look at why certain members are not qualifying for certain programs and work with them to help them qualify.

Question 7: Do you feel the general council should have a vote on the tribal council terms in office? If so, should tribal council be two or four years?

- I feel that the General Council should be allowed to have a voice in the term of the Tribal Council members. As for the term, itself, four years does seem like a long time but there is a learning curve for new Tribal Council members, and it takes time to cultivate relationships with various agencies and other governmental entities. I believe most city councils recognize this and have four-year terms for their council members. Having said this, I would be willing to accept the decision of the people. I do, however, favor term limits (*e.g.* two term maximum). This would ensure the infusion of new ideas from incoming Tribal Council members and also ensure that no Tribal Council member starts to treat the office as their personal fiefdom.

Question 8: Where do you stand with respect to Toiyabe Indian Health Project and enforcement of TERO?

- I have not been involved directly in this issue; however, I understand that Toiyabe has been fined for non-compliance with the TERO ordinance, which was put in place to ensure there is no discrimination of tribal members seeking employment and to ensure their rights during employment. I understand that Toiyabe initially declined to pay such fees, which are rapidly increasing. As long as TERO is in effect, I believe that Toiyabe should comply with the ordinance. All parties need to remember who they serve and must come together to resolve this issue for the betterment of the community.



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Question 9: What are your views on creating a Constitution for Tribal Council in addition to adopting the law and order, and a misconduct policy? This is so there can be a separation of powers between the two branches to ensure the Tribal Police and Tribal Court can enforce the law objectively without fear of retaliation.

- I believe the Tribe should have a Constitution that is voted upon by the General Council along with a 'law & order' code. A constitution is a vital part of our sovereignty as a Nation. As stated above, I favor a separation of power between the Tribal Council and the Tribal Court. I believe the Tribal Court and the Tribal Police must be free to exercise their powers without undue influence or fear of reprisal. I think the reference to a misconduct policy refers to a code of ethics, which I fully support.

Question 10: Many feel the constitution and bylaws is a necessary document. What are some of the items you feel need to be included in this document?

- A good Constitution will address, among other things, tribal government powers, the use of ordinances and bylaws, methods of enforcing the Constitution, checks and balances, and amendments of the Constitution. It is imperative for the General Council to have input and vote on the final form of the Constitution.

Question 11: What is your take on making a balance between the executive branch, judicial branch, and legislative branch so that one is not over the other, so that they are equal, which will put a stop to the possibility of any future Tribal Council potentially using Tribal Police and the Tribal Court for personal and/or family gain?

- This is similar to question 9. The issue I see with making the Tribal Police equal to the Tribal Council is that there would be no oversight of the Tribal Police. If there are policing issues, it would not be clear as to who would be the arbiter in such cases. I definitely favor a clear separation of the Tribal Council and the Tribal Court.

Question 12: Do you think the Tribal Council should have the power to fire and hire tribal employees like they do now and why or why not?

- The Tribal Council is bound to fire and hire employees in accordance with tribal employee policies. However, it is imperative for the Tribal Council to act in an ethical manner in its dealings with employees. Even if employment is "at will," employees should always be given a second chance (*e.g.* employee is placed on an action plan instead of being immediately fired, unless a major transgression has occurred). We have made an investment in our tribal employees and need to work with them to retain them, if possible. I also feel that nepotism has no place in the workplace.



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Question 13: How do you plan to change things if the current Tribal Council does not agree with you or your ideas of change?

- It would be up to me to provide the data and research to support my position and convince my fellow Tribal Council members, in a respectful manner, to come around to my way of thinking or to suggest viable alternatives so we are able to, at least, meet half-way. Getting upset and storming out of meetings is not the answer.