

Washington County Board of Supervisors – District 2 (Republican)

Lisa Kramer

Jerry Kruse

Mike Mackin

Monte Tjelmeland

Questions List:

Other	County Priorities	Decency	Personal Story	Homosexuality
Biographical	State to County	Property Tax	Constitution	Past President
Motivation	Revenue	Eminent Domain	Family	Anything else?
Qualifications	Job Creation	County Business	Personal/Political	
Sustainable	(County)	Connection	Abortion/capital	
Development	Gambling	Governing	punishment/etc.	
	Immigration	documents		

Other - Information about making contact with the candidate.

Lisa Kramer	Answers copied from email response received Wednesday, April 02, 2014 8:20 AM
Jerry Kruse	Incumbent. First contacted by resident of the district. 4/1, 9:57am, acquired cell number. 4/1, 9:58am, candidate said maybe could do by Friday. 4/12, 2pm, informed that opponents had answered. Told giving some answers better than none. Answers copied from email response received Mon, 14 Apr 2014, 1:42am.
Mike Mackin	First contacted by resident of the district. 4/1, 10:03am, phone didn't connect. Answers copied from email response received Wed, 9 Apr 2014 3:19pm
Monte Tjelmeland	Wed, Apr 2, 2014 at 3:43 PM, candidate emailed, "I have to review my answers tonight and then I will return them tomorrow." Answers copied from email response received Thursday, April 03, 2014 1:54 PM.

Biographical - Please include biographical information you consider important for voters to know and/or reference your website.

Lisa Kramer	I have been a Washington County resident since 1996, when I was 22 years old. I hold a Bachelor of Science degree from UNO and a Master of Physical Therapy degree from UNMC. I met my husband at UNO in 1994, we married in 2000, and we now have an eight year old daughter named Katie and a six year old son named Justin. I am a small business owner, having owned the physical therapy clinic I established in Bennington since 2005. I am a life member of Golden Key National Honor Society, life member of the National Rifle Association, and a current Central Committee member and past Executive Committee member in the Washington County Republican Party. In 2003, I completed reserve officer training at the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center in Grand Island through the Douglas County Sheriff's Office Reserve Deputy program. Due to changes in state statutes, I could no longer volunteer my time with Douglas County, thus became a Bennington Police Department reserve officer until 2009.
Jerry Kruse	I was born, raised and have spent my lifetime on the same farm. I went to Blair High School; farmed; worked s a right-away agent for Northern Natural Gas, Keystone Pipeline and Union Pacific Railroad; and have retired from owning my own trucking firm.
Mike Mackin	I graduated from UNK in 1971 with a BA in Math and Education. I coached and taught for four years and was a high school principal for three years. I did master classes at UNO and Creighton University in Business Ed. I went to the private sector and managed SESmith Lumber in Blair for 15 years. I went into the wholesale business at Ashton in Omaha for 10 years when we were moved because of the Quest Center. I then went into the Distribution business in Blair for the last 14 years. I am presently the sales manager and still working full time. I have served on the Blair Little League board from 1981-1996. I was the president for 3 different times during that period. I also have been the president of the parish council in 1990 for St. Francis Borgia Church. I served on the Blair Rural Fire Board from 1999-2012. I also have volunteered for many civic organizations in Blair. I have been a resident of Washington County for 38 years.
Monte Tjelmeland	1993 - BA degree Graduate of Buena Vista College in Accounting 1998-2012 - Mutual of Omaha - Accounting Supervisor 2013-Present - Peter Kiewit Corp. - Senior Accountant

Motivation - What has motivated you to seek this office? What do you hope to accomplish?

Lisa Kramer	I am seeking the District 2 position on the Washington County Board of Supervisors to help guide Washington County toward a more cohesive, forward-thinking future of growth and prosperity.
Jerry Kruse	Making good decisions for our county is very important to me.
Mike Mackin	I was encouraged by many people who have been great contributors for causes in the area. I hope to accomplish a complete voice for the county's biggest problems.
Monte Tjelmeland	I was motivated to seek the office of Washington County Board of Supervisor - District 2 because I wanted to get back into helping local government. I spent the last eight years on the Fort Calhoun Rural Fire Protection District's board. My work schedule conflicted with the scheduled meeting times of the District and felt a need to resign. I want to accomplish a couple of things. In general, I want to improve the communication between the County board and its residents. Specifically, I want to help reduce the size of the County's budget and give the County residents some tax relief.

Qualifications - What three qualifications do you bring to this office?

Lisa Kramer	Three qualifications I bring include budgetary knowledge as a small business owner, conservative values, and the ability to communicate effectively.
Jerry Kruse	I have good management skills, good negotiation skills and I uphold good moral values.
Mike Mackin	I have leadership skills and have run the three sides of business-the retail side, the wholesale side, and the distribution side. This gives me a total experience for running the county side.
Monte Tjelmeland	- Over 30 years of Business and Accounting experience - 8 years of Fort Calhoun Fire Protection District board experience - Bachelor's degree in Accounting from Buena Vista College

Sustainable Development - *In some venues, the term "sustainable development" is tied to the UN Agenda 21 thinking. Others consider conservation of natural resources to be tantamount. Where would you place yourself on environmental issues and why?*

Lisa Kramer	First, I believe the UN should have no role in dictating the actions of the United States, and do not believe it serves our country's best interest. I do believe in appropriate measures for conservation of our natural resources. Personally, our family actively recycles and conserves water through use of drought-resistant grasses. I believe we have a responsibility to manage our resources wisely. We can be thoughtful in our plans for growth and development that include awareness of the environmental impact without infringing upon the rights of private property owners.
Jerry Kruse	[not answered]
Mike Mackin	I am completely on the side of extreme conservation. I still believe that the people themselves should be responsible.
Monte Tjelmeland	I do not know anything about UN Agenda 21 thinking. On environmental issues, I believe that we should try and replace what we use. For example, if the board allowed a new development, we need to require that they replace the twice as many trees as they tear down. Our family tries to do our part of recycle.

County Priorities - What order of priority would you place on dealing with which issues facing the county?

Lisa Kramer	I would make my priorities as a member of the Washington County Board to improve visibility and transparency of county operations, promote economic growth and development (particularly along the Highway 133 corridor), improve the budgetary process, and encourage collaboration with county departments to improve efficiency through use of technology. I would also be diligent in advocating for Washington County as it is impacted by other agencies, including the NRD.
Jerry Kruse	[not answered]
Mike Mackin	Budget, nightly meetings, get the venomous atmosphere out of the meetings.
Monte Tjelmeland	- 1st priority will be county finances and business efficiency - 2nd priority will be communication with county residents - 3rd priority will be regulating county's new housing developments

State to County Revenue - *What actions have you/would you take to ensure that the county receives its proportionate share of tax dollars from the State of Nebraska? What actions have you/would you take to ensure that the county receives its proportionate representation on boards and commissions, which allocate state tax dollars which fund counties and county services?*

Lisa Kramer	The county board should remain aware of changes in the state legislature that could impact funding to the county. By remaining informed on legislative proceedings, we can plan for any budgetary impacts these changes would have. Building relationships with other counties would also allow for information sharing. However, as a taxing authority, the county funds most of its expenditures via its own levy. As a county board member, I would focus on responsible spending at the county level to maintain the lowest tax levy possible while providing the required services.
Jerry Kruse	[not answered]
Mike Mackin	I would take whatever the policies provide. I don't have enough knowledge of the state funding.
Monte Tjelmeland	I believe that the continued review of the County's financial information and communication with State entities will be the best approach to monitoring Washington County's share of State dollars. Additionally, we need to continue to write federal grant applications for public safety requests and other departments.

Job Creation (County) - *How can the county board help in job creation? What would you do to make the county more business friendly? What specific ideas do you have for jobs?*

Lisa Kramer	The county board can facilitate job creation by encouraging commerce through implementation of pro-growth policies in our Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Regulations. By working in collaboration with the Planning Board and overseeing the Planning Department, growth can be stimulated throughout the county, particularly along the Highway 133 corridor. We can work with the Assessor, Clerk, and Treasurer's offices to achieve greater ease and access of information through technology, as well, thus making our county more appealing to businesses.
Jerry Kruse	[not answered]
Mike Mackin	The county should always welcome anyone who is setting to get permits or a business that wants to come. I know that we have discounted some business and there is more to do for the appointed official who should not be anti-business. Jobs are created through common sense and to not deny people a chance to start a business in the county, not the city.
Monte Tjelmeland	First, I believe that the County needs to reduce wasteful spending, in turn, will reduce taxing residents and businesses. We need to improve the efficiency and cost of doing government's business. You can do that by County department's working together. Second, the County board needs to make it easier to bring business here. Good leadership will allow smooth and painless government approvals.

Gambling - *Discuss the pros and cons of government having more revenue from gambling.*

Lisa Kramer	Gambling revenue is a moot point at the county government level, given the State of Nebraska has not allowed it.
Jerry Kruse	I am against gambling revenue. I feel the damage to moral issues is escalated by gambling and the revenue received does not weigh the moral decline.
Mike Mackin	There is no question in my mind that should deny gambling in any way. I am pro-gambling.
Monte Tjelmeland	I believe there is no real benefit to gambling in this County. Yes, we can raise revenue through gambling, but you eventually pay the money back through treatment programs and public safety (i.e. burglaries-more officers, more police cars, foreclosures in personal and business, etc.). With that being said, I'm not opposed to gambling within the County. I just don't think we have the population to support a gambling establishment.

Immigration - *What role should each level of government have in the immigration issue? From city, to county, to state, to federal?*

Lisa Kramer	The federal government should implement and enforce clear laws/guidelines relating to illegal immigration, and simplify the process for legal immigration. State and local governments should then have the authority and support to uphold and enforce those federal laws, and even create more restrictive laws as they determine appropriate.
Jerry Kruse	My point of view on immigration is that it is a state and federal issue.
Mike Mackin	This should be entirely up to each state.
Monte Tjelmeland	Being fairly uninformed about the immigration issue, I believe the County's role is through law enforcement and helping local businesses. Local businesses and law enforcement need to continue to communicate with each other. Businesses need to follow the law of hiring documented workers! They need to question who they are hiring. Law enforcement needs to run background checks, when requested, and work with state and federal authorities.

Decency - *Should decency laws, including things like sex trafficking, be written at the national, state, county, or local level? What should they include? Who should enforce them?*

Lisa Kramer	State and local governments should have the ability to regulate businesses dealing with explicit material. Sex-trafficking and human trafficking are already federally unlawful.
Jerry Kruse	I feel the county should write up decency laws' pertaining to the issues happening in their immediate area and what each county will or will not tolerate with enforcement help from ALL counties, cities, states and federal law enforcement agencies.
Mike Mackin	I think we have enough laws on the books for each city, county, and state. Police enforcement is the only answer to a question that I see to be unimportant to what the county states for the indecency problem.
Monte Tjelmeland	My opinion on decency laws related to sex trafficking and others an offense that crosses state lines is a federal issue and should be addressed through federal laws. Obviously, local law enforcement needs to communicate with state and federal authorities on the arrest and conviction of these criminals.

Property Tax - Discuss what authorization/control you see the board having with regard to the County Assessor's assessments and resulting taxation.

Lisa Kramer	The County Assessor is an elected official, therefore accountable to the constituents. A good County Board will work cohesively with all county offices to ensure efficiencies and accuracies exist in their departments. The County Board is the checks and balances for those departments.
Jerry Kruse	None, only County Assessors are trained in assessment evaluations.
Mike Mackin	I think the county should budget accordingly, not have a contingency fund that is staggering. When I was on the fire board, we decreased taxes three times. The county assessor should be involved in any discussion on the budget relating to property taxes.
Monte Tjelmeland	I believe the County Board should be the final approver of the County's Assessor's assessments. I don't think it is in the best interest of the County residents that one person have full control of the taxing process. Seven board members working with the County's Assessor makes more sense to me.

Eminent Domain - Describe your thinking on eminent domain and private property rights.

Lisa Kramer	Eminent domain should be used sparingly and thoughtfully when it is considered necessary for growth and development of infrastructure. Individuals should be fairly compensated in such cases.
Jerry Kruse	I think eminent domain violates private property rights. Too often, eminent domain withholds fair or current property values.
Mike Mackin	I am a perfect example for this question. I lived in my house on 133 for 37 years and was moved. This is why I had to resign from the fire board because I moved 5 miles south. Eminent domain is very unfair because you have to settle on the current market value.
Monte Tjelmeland	I believe that the County should investigate all avenues to avoid "eminent domain" process. This process should be the last resort and should be extremely beneficial to ALL county residents, not a select few!

County Business Connection - Do you, a family member, or your employer have any business relationship serving the county?
Please describe.

Lisa Kramer	I, personally, have no business relationship serving the county. My husband, Kyle, is a Washington County Reserve Deputy. He is also the IT Manager for the Douglas County 911 Center, thus works with Washington County regarding their 911 system.
Jerry Kruse	[not answered]
Mike Mackin	No
Monte Tjelmeland	I don't know of any business relationships with county. My current employer, Kiewit Corporation, may have some construction contracts with the County that I don't know about or may in the future. If elected, I would abstain from any voting on contracts that may include Kiewit bids.

Governing documents - What do you see as the major governing documents for this position?

Lisa Kramer	The governing documents for the County Board are the U.S. Constitution, State Constitution, County By-Laws, County Comprehensive Plan.
Jerry Kruse	[not answered]
Mike Mackin	Budget and having seven board members get along.
Monte Tjelmeland	County Board Handbook that is published by the Nebraska Association of County Boards.

Personal Story - Please briefly describe a situation where you had to stand alone for what you thought was right when the momentum was pushing the other way. What was the result?

Lisa Kramer	In my practice as a physical therapist, I had to advocate for a patient that was not receiving thorough care from his physician. I encouraged the patient to obtain a second opinion. When his physician learned I had recommended a second opinion, he contacted me to notify me of his discontent and that he would no longer refer patients to my clinic. The patient did require further medical intervention that the physician had missed, thus the outcome for the patient made the loss of referrals worth it.
Jerry Kruse	I was interested in establishing a 5-yr warranty plan on the county's motor-graders instead of continued monthly maintenance costs which the county has always done previously. I persuaded five members to instate this program, thereby saving the county thousands of dollars.
Mike Mackin	Nothing Available
Monte Tjelmeland	As the Treasurer of the Fort Calhoun Fire Protection District, I initiated the bidding of the District's insurance policies. After the opening of bids, most members did not want to move the insurance outside of Fort Calhoun. I pushed to move the policies to an agency in Blair due to the cost saving. I understand the idea of keeping business local, but when there is a cost savings to the taxpayer, we need to move on the opportunity. Common sense will prevail!

Constitution - Please briefly describe a situation where you had to stand alone for what you thought was right when the momentum was pushing the other way. What was the result?

Lisa Kramer	Upholding the Constitution means we have a duty to obey the laws of our nation and ensure all citizens have equal application of those laws. It also means we defend the framework of this nation against tyranny.
Jerry Kruse	Taking this oath is a privilege and an honor; it means participating in serving my Country.
Mike Mackin	It means to constantly have the taxpayers involved in any decision. The constitution has been violated nationally for 8 years and on a county level it should involve everyone. The biggest complaint I hear is the meetings are bullied and not for the public input.
Monte Tjelmeland	I believe that "upholding the Constitution" is the first and foremost part of our job as a County Board of Supervisor. This document is the basis to our existence as a country and nation. I believe that "taking the oath of office" means that I work for my constituents with highest integrity and most honest intentions.

Family - What role has your family played in your seeking this office? In holding this position, how do you foresee it affecting your family?

Lisa Kramer	My husband and our children fully support my decision to run for County Board. Though our kids are young yet, they already understand the importance of duty and patriotism.
Jerry Kruse	My family totally supports my bid for office. My position has not affected my family at all these last four years.
Mike Mackin	They are behind me 100%
Monte Tjelmeland	My family has played a moral supporting role during my seeking office. I believe that they will only be affected by the amount of time away from them. I understand that it will be large amount of time in the beginning, but should decrease as the public becomes more confident in the board.

Everyone questions - (Regardless of what office is being sought, we ask the following questions so voters can better predict how you will handle tough issues.)

Personal/Political - To what degree should an office holder's personal principles be reflected in political decision making? To whom/what will you go for counsel in decision making?

Lisa Kramer	Elected officials are elected to represent the people. We all cast our ballots for those individuals we feel are best suited for the position and reflect our values. In the end, if an office holder's opinion on a matter does not reflect that of the majority of their constituency, they have a duty to represent their constituents. I will seek input from the constituents, including my friends, family, and neighbors within the district. Resources outside of Washington County may certainly be beneficial also.
Jerry Kruse	[not answered]
Mike Mackin	No one should have their principals involved in any decision. I think the County Attorney should be available at any meeting.
Monte Tjelmeland	In general, I believe that my principles follow most of my county constituents. I will counsel with whatever department is related to the issue and the county attorney if need be.

Abortion/capital punishment/etc. - What definition do you give for each of these terms: pro-life, pro-choice? How do you define yourself and how did you arrive at that view? How does your position relate to the death penalty, embryonic stem cell research, and physician-assisted suicide?

Lisa Kramer	Pro-life: The position that pregnancy should not be terminated voluntarily. Pro-choice: The position that it is a woman's right to choose to terminate a pregnancy voluntarily. I am pro-life, I am in favor of capital punishment for violent offenders. I am in favor of limited, regulated stem cell research, and I am against physician-assisted suicide though I agree with living wills that establish what life-saving means can be deployed. My family, faith, and experiences have all contributed to these beliefs, and I am very cognizant and respectful of the fact that these are individual beliefs.
Jerry Kruse	I am pro-life. I think Nebraska should keep the death penalty and I am currently researching more information regarding embryonic stem cell research to make an informed decision.
Mike Mackin	I am pro-life, and the death penalty I favor. The other positions I look at these as special interest group interests.
Monte Tjelmeland	No comment

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Homosexuality - *Some consider same-sex relationships should carry the same rights and privileges as traditional marriage. Some view homosexuality as an issue of potential discrimination on the level with race or ethnicity. Some consider it a matter of personal privacy. Some say marriage, for numerous reasons, should remain defined by government as between one man and one woman. Some say children should be raised by a mother and a father and that they are being forgotten in today's discussions on the subject. With which group's philosophy do you most closely agree, and why?*

Lisa Kramer	Of those options, I most closely agree that it is a matter of personal privacy.
Jerry Kruse	I do believe marriage is between a man and a woman and I also believe children should be raised by a mother and father if at all possible. I base my answers on my Christian views.
Mike Mackin	I support a man and a woman being married. The homosexual side is their choice but I don't think the state or government entities should even acknowledge benefits.
Monte Tjelmeland	No comment

Past President - *What key considerations did you use in deciding how you voted for President in 2012?*

Lisa Kramer	In any/all elections, I vote for the candidate I consider the most capable and suited for the job and the most in line with my values. Those values include fiscal conservatism, Constitutionalism, and limited government.
Jerry Kruse	[not answered]
Mike Mackin	I am ultra-conservative and I think we have all seen what has happened to our country.
Monte Tjelmeland	- The keys to my vote depended on them being conservative, fiscally responsible, paying down the federal debt and a mindset of less government.

Anything else? - *Declare anything else you want voters to know about you.*

Lisa Kramer	I have a very strong sense of duty and fairness. I will listen to all sides of a situation with respect and consideration. These qualities will help unite the county board and county departments to build a stronger team for Washington County.
Jerry Kruse	I work hard to honor the trust given to me by my constituents. I try to make myself available and approachable to those needing my help. I enjoy serving in the capacity of County Supervisor and making decisions that will make a difference to how our county is maintained.
Mike Mackin	[nothing further noted]
Monte Tjelmeland	[nothing further noted]