



BCRCC Candidate Questionnaire for website & social media Introduction:

- *Full name:* Stephen Francis Smith.
- *Which position are you running for?* Bonner County Commissioner, District 1, and Precinct Committeeman, Sagle Precinct.
- *How long have you been registered as a Republican?* I believe that I have always been registered to vote as a Republican. *Have you ever been affiliated or registered with any other party?* No. *If so, please specify.* N/A.
- *How long have you lived in your district?* 37 years.

Questions:

1. *What kind of professional, volunteer, or elected experience do you have that would prepare you for this position?* While an undergraduate student at the University of Idaho, I was employed as the Student Programs Director, supervising 16 different student programs. I practiced law for 47 years in Bonner County, Idaho, which included serving as not only City Attorney for the cities of Sandpoint, Hope and East Hope, but also as legal counsel for water, sewer and translator districts. My volunteer work has included chairing boards of directors of several local nonprofit organizations, teaching local courses about the U.S. and Idaho Constitutions and about county government, and serving as the treasurer for the Bonner County Republican Central Committee.
2. *What is the role of government (particularly the government for which you seek office)?* According to the second paragraph of the United States Declaration of Independence, the biblical and constitutional role of county government is to secure and protect the unalienable rights given to people in the county by their Creator.
3. *What are the responsibilities and the duties of the position you are seeking?* The county government has a dual function. First, the county serves on behalf of the Idaho State government by administering elections, enforcing state law and performing other governmental functions as mandated by the Idaho legislature. Secondly, as a unit of local government, the county fulfills responsibilities given to the county by the Idaho legislature to meet needs of county citizens, which include health, welfare, public safety, agricultural services, public works, planning, parks, recreation and disaster relief.

4. *What is the source of authority for the position you are seeking?* The ultimate source of authority, according to Romans 13:1, is God: "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God." That fact is recognized in the following phrase from the Preamble to the Idaho Constitution: "...thankful to Almighty God for our freedom" The county commissioners jointly fulfill the three roles of government listed in Isaiah 33:22, which are judicial, legislative and executive: "(For the LORD is our Judge, the LORD is our Lawgiver, the LORD is our King; He will save us);" In Idaho law, a county system of government is authorized both by Article XVIII of the Idaho Constitution and Title 31 of the Idaho Code.
5. *What made you decide to run for this position?* I have been attending, and watching recordings of, meetings of the Bonner County Commissioners since August 2025. In so doing, I saw the District 1 commissioner violating county ordinance, state law and the U. S. Constitution. It became clear that I could give back to the community by running to improve the government in the county where my wife and I raised our 5 children, the county where several of our children and grandchildren are residing, and the county where we would like to continue to live. I intend to help make Bonner County the best place to help families thrive. I firmly believe that, with my "legal eyes" on the county business, I can help the county avoid the legal missteps of the past. For example, when two of the current commissioners tried to do county planning business in secret and without public notice, I knew they were violating the Idaho Open Meeting Law and, as a commissioner, could have helped avoid the violation. Serving as a county commissioner is a place where my skillset fits well. After praying long and hard about the decision whether to run for this position, both my wife and I believed that it was the Lord's will for me to run. Since then, the Lord has answered many prayers and opened many doors, providing further confirmation that running for this position is His will.
6. *What would you like to achieve if elected?* My three main goals would be to (1) protect citizens' rights to own, use and manage their private property without government overreach; (2) make every tax dollar count and thereby protect taxpayers from unnecessary taxes; and, (3) safeguard county taxpayers, by applying my 47 years of professional experience in promoting lawful and transparent governance, to avoid expensive legal missteps.
7. *What does it mean to be conservative? Please provide examples applicable to the office you are running for.* The term "conservative" is one of two approaches to government that are polar opposites. The opposite of a conservative is a liberal. According to Webster's 1828 Dictionary, the term "conservative" [from "con + servo" meaning "to hold, keep, guard"] is defined as "Preserve in a safe and entire state, or from loss, waste or injury." According to that same dictionary, the term "liberal" [from "liber," meaning "free"] is defined as "Free to give or bestow." Examples of actions of a conservative county commissioner would be to make sure the county is collecting money that is due to it, as a means of preventing loss; to closely review bills and claims to only pay legitimate and accurate bills and claims, as a means of preventing waste; and, to follow existing law to honor and uphold the constitutional rights of citizens., as a means of preventing injury to the rights of citizens.

8. *What makes you a good candidate for this position?* My 47 years of practice as a lawyer, many years of which were invested in representing governmental entities, including cities and taxing districts, have given me a depth of practical experience that will be invaluable to serving as a county commissioner. My training and experience have uniquely prepared me to perform the judicial, legislative and executive duties required of a county commissioner,
9. *What guides you in your decision making?* Proverbs 3:5 & 6 state the starting point of my decision making: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." Then, decision making would be further guided by the United States Constitution, the Idaho Constitution, Idaho statutes, and Bonner County ordinances.
10. *For the government office you are seeking, what is your opinion of our current structure of the governmental agencies and centralization versus decentralization – do you think there should be any changes?* With Idaho being a "Dillon Rule" state, county commissioners must carry out the county's duties and responsibilities as mandated by Idaho statute. The current structure of county government appears to have departments for fulfilling all those duties and responsibilities. After being elected, I plan to review the operations of those departments to determine if the current structure and level of decentralization can be improved for better stewardship of the county's human and financial resources.
11. *Please explain any disagreements you have with the Idaho Republican Platform by Article and Section number.* I agree with that platform.
12. *Have you received any endorsements from other people or organizations? If so, please list.* Endorsements have been received in writing from Rick Howarth, former Sandpoint City Councilman and Seth Samuels, an executive with Kochava. A verbal endorsement has been received from Christine Denova, Executive Director of IdaHope Families, Inc., at the formal candidacy announcement event.
13. *Are you affiliated with any political groups, clubs, or organizations? If so, please list.* I am the treasurer of the Bonner County Republican Central Committee and a member of its executive committee. I have been invited to meetings of, and have provided requested information to, the Judicial Evaluation Task Force of the Kootenai County Republican Central Committee.
14. *Feel free to share anything else you'd like voters & the BCRCC to know about you.* I'm thankful to all patriots who have paid the price of liberty for the past 250 years so that I have the privilege of living in freedom as an American and a resident of Bonner County. I view serving as a county commissioner as a way to join in what patriots have done, and must continue to do, to preserve our constitutional republic.