

2017 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
John	W.	Urquhart

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

King County Sheriff

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

I have been a resident of King County for 50+ years.

5. How long have you resided in King County?

Same as above.

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: John Urquhart for King County Sheriff

Address: PO Box 9100

City/State/Zip: Seattle, WA 98109

Campaign Phone: 209.535.6166 (campaign manager's cell phone, will get a local number soon)

Campaign E-mail: info@johnforsheriff.com

Campaign Website: www.johnforsheriff.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
King County Sheriff	Elective	12/1/12 - Present	Yes. I manage an agency of 1,100 employees with an annual budget of \$175,000,000.
President – S.H.E.R.I.F.F. Fund	Appointed	2011 - Present	President

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
None	

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
 - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
 - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
 - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

In 2012, there were two audits of the King County Sheriff's Office, ordered by the King County Council. One was conducted by the King County Auditor's Office, the other by an outside firm, Hillard Heintze of Chicago, a well-respected firm that advises on police management. Both audits came to essentially the same primary conclusion: There was a culture inside the Sheriff's Office of not holding employees accountable. This manifested itself in several ways:

- **Over 100 Internal investigations of deputies were "lost" i.e. where was no record of their status;**
- **The Sheriff's Office was likely to lose their accreditation from the *Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement (CALEA)*, an international organization that certifies that police agencies are following standards for best practices. The Sheriff's Office had spent tens of thousands of dollars getting that original accreditation, and was now in danger of losing it.**
- **Use of Force investigations were woefully inadequate and the number of investigations was too small for an organization this size.**
- **The commander of Internal Investigations reported to a civilian rather than the Sheriff, and the Sheriff had little interaction with either the commander or Internal Investigations in general.**
- **Command Staff was "disengaged" from accountability;**
- **Finally, sources close to the US Attorney's Office told me the office was looking at the Sheriff's Office for a possible DOJ consent decree.**

I felt all of this was an untenable situation for the Sheriff's Office and that I had credibility in the community, the leadership skills, and certainly the desire to fix this situation. So I ran for the *Office of Sheriff* on the platform of bringing accountability, leadership, and transparency back to the Sheriff's Office. I won the election by 14%, defeating a sitting sheriff for the first time in the history of the King County Sheriff's Office.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

Leadership: The Sheriff's Office is the second largest local police agency in the Pacific Northwest, and the Sheriff is the "chief law enforcement officer" in King County, by state law. Therefore, it is incredibly important that the Sheriff is a leader, both internally and externally. I have a proven record as a strong leader over the last 4½ years as Sheriff. The community sees that, as do my employees.

Decisiveness: It is very important for a leader to be decisive. Important for employees to see that, but also for the community, especially when it comes to a criminal justice. The primary job of the Sheriff's Office is to reduce crime and the fear of crime. A Sheriff who is decisive in words and actions will help to reduce the fear of crime in King County. Decisiveness in fighting crime will also be seen by residents as taking action to help the community.

Plain-Spoken: Too often politicians are wont to use double-speak, beat around the bush, or just not answer hard questions, oftentimes because of the fear of alienating a constituency. This does not inspire confidence! I have a well-deserved reputation for "telling it like it is," speaking truth to power, and generally not mincing words. I get more kudos for this from strangers and community members than pretty much anything else I do! The *Seattle Times* once described me as, "...blunt speaking...known for his honesty and ruthless wit....who sees the media as an integral part of the democratic process."

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

1. **Before becoming a police officer, I started and operated several businesses. I built up one to four locations and around 75 employees before selling to "pursue other interests," including becoming a full-time police officer. I consider it a great accomplishment to be able to make sales, collect the proceeds, and make sure 75 employees receive a paycheck every two weeks!**
2. **In my over four years as Sheriff, I have never gone to the County Council and asked for additional moneys because I overspent or otherwise mismanaged my budget. In fact, I have returned almost \$6,000,000 to the general fund because I was able to *underspend* my budget.**
3. **I have increased diversity hiring by adding a 10% bonus to civil service scores if the applicant speaks a second language—critical in King County where over 170 languages are spoken. I've also offered an extra 10% to anyone who served in the Peace Corps for two years, again to bring cultural competency to the Sheriff's Office and the community. The Sheriff's Office is the first police agency to offer these bonuses anywhere in the country.**
4. **I retained our CALEA accreditation and the Sheriff's Office became reaccredited in 2014 for another 3 years.**
5. **I have returned a culture of accountability to the Sheriffs' Office.**

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

I have been a police officer, both full and part-time, for over 41 years. That is the ultimate definition of “community engagement.” A police officer interacts with the community every day, whether as a patrol officer or detective. I am happy to say that my interaction has been successful by any measurement, including my election to Sheriff in 2012 and again in 2013, as well as the fact that that I have never had a citizen complaint that resulted in discipline!

As Sheriff, I meet with the community on a regular basis. Oftentimes weekly. Sometimes it is to quell concerns over a crime situation. Sometimes it is to simply provide information. As Sheriff, I answer to all 2.1 million residents of King County, even though we may not be their primary police department. I have always felt it is vitally important to be seen and to be accessible to the community.

I am an active engaged member on numerous committees including the Juvenile Justice Equity Steering Committee, South King County Coordinating Council on Gangs, Regional Law Safety & Justice Committee, and the Criminal Justice Council, among others.

Every spring King County has 10 meetings across the unincorporated areas in a Town Hall format. They are called Community Service Areas. I am prominently featured at every meeting with community members in those areas. Since I have been Sheriff I have attended more than 40 of these meetings.

Finally, the subject of immigration has been in the news lately. King County has an estimated 150,000 undocumented immigrants, all of whom have friends, co-workers, or relatives in the area. There is a palatable fear in that community of deportation, if not *imminent* deportation. In the last three months, I have met with at least 30 groups to explain what is going on, explain the term “sanctuary city” and what it means, talk about detainer orders, and generally offer reassurance that the local police have no authority to enforce federal immigration law, nor will we be working directly with ICE to deport people.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

Our most important duty is maintaining the trust of the community we serve. This is critical if we are to be successful as a police agency. We need to do this by being a mirror of the community, i.e. having more women, ethnicities, and persons of color than we do now. That also means mirroring the community’s values. It means showing the community that we hold our employees accountable for their misdeeds. It means being respectful of their culture. It means being responsible for their needs and what they think is important, as opposed to what we think is important.

Obviously, the primary duty of a police agency is to fight crime. Crime overall has gone down since I’ve been Sheriff. Cases solved has gone up to the highest it’s been in recent memory, over 10% higher than it was in 2010 and one of the highest in the region.

The “nuts and bolts” of the King County Sheriff’s duties involve the day-to-day management of an organization with 1,100 employees and an annual budget of \$175 million. Because the Sheriff’s Office is a King County “general fund” agency, the Sheriff must be able to operate the department within the means of an ever-diminishing source of revenue. Every biennium we have taken millions of dollars worth of cuts to the Sheriff’s Office.

Despite all the cuts, I have managed to maintain our service levels of patrol in unincorporated King County while adding investigative units like the Domestic Violence Unit, which the Prosecutor’s Office credits with a 20% increase in felony DV filings, and thus protecting more victims since the suspect in a domestic violence crime is more likely than a suspect in any other crime to commit a crime of violence in

the future, including homicide.

But the Sheriff also has more overarching duties to the community. Unlike municipal police chiefs in King County, the Sheriff does not answer to a Mayor or City Council...the Sheriff's responsibility is to the voters and community. Again, the Sheriff must run a Sheriff's Office that maintains the trust of the community. That's why I ran on accountability in 2012, and that's how I have operated my Sheriff's Office since taking office.