Colorado Springs City Council Candidate Survey

Date: March 3, 2023 (Revised response received by Springs Taxpayers United on 3/10/23)

Name: Michelle Talarico

Office: City Council District 3

1. Do you support or oppose the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR)? Feel free to comment on projects you would support using TABOR refunds for —i.e., subsidized housing, parks, pothole repair, etc.) (200 words maximum) TABOR is complicated. It is always best used for infrastructure to include street repair, potholes, etc. I also think that we have seriously neglected our parks system. We must increase their budget. I have mixed feelings and thoughts about subsidized housing, and I look forward to learning more when I am on council so that I may properly convey the wishes of my constituents.

2. Do you believe private companies should deliver goods and services to consumers and businesses? Or, should government funded enterprises be involved, such as Municipal Broadband? Please explain. (250 words maximum) I do believe that private or for profit companies should deliver goods and services such as broadband and that it should not be a government funded project. This will only increase taxes and in my opinion cause problems. Let's keep the government doing what it should do which is safety; to include police, fire and emergency medical services, parks improvement and infrastructure. I am a business owner so I believe that private companies have a right and a privilege to make a profit in our economy, bringing this into government would not be something I would be in favor of.

Do you support "road-dieting" traffic lanes in favor of bike lanes and bus lanes in Colorado Springs? Please explain. (200 words maximum) I support multi model transportation options as many have no alternative but, there are many aspects to consider.

General Palmer was a developer and he laid out the core of "his" city with a great deal of vision. Included in his vision was a city that actively allowed its residents to be able to recreate in the beautiful city we have. Part of that vision while not specific to bikes was that Parks and Open spaces are so critical for a thriving society.

Social engineering is a thing but, not my thing. In general, I support the use of and continued investigation about the benefits of e bikes, we have a great Pike Ride program that could be more actively engaged in .

Before I would decide on decisions affecting neighborhoods, I will have all the facts. I look forward to the continued study of "Road Dieting."

3.

4. Do you support a study to explore expanding Constitution Avenue? Please explain. (200 words maximum) I support the study and I agree we need an east /west smarter pathway. I am curious to listen to all constituents, neighbors and residents because this would cause serious congestion and potential for many negative effects for those that live nearby.

Will you support taxpayer-funded Front Range Rail? Please explain. (200 words maximum). t's my current understanding that most of our public transportation system is funded by the taxpayers. In my opinion it is not a self-sustainable model...not sure it ever can be.

The question then becomes is a subsidized public transportation system in the best interests of a community, most importantly our community?

I do not have that answer but I will do all I can to be receptive to learning all that I can so that I can correctly support the voices of our residents.

It would not be in my character, or businessperson mode to have a knee jerk reaction one-way or the other, without more information. Those same instincts would also recognize that our taxpayers, businesses, families are currently burdened enough and if we can find a better solution than higher taxes, fees ...more burden... and that would always be my preference. It is also my perception that our community will have a hard time with any new taxes especially with the need. 4

Personally, I would love to see this happen in my lifetime but I don't know that we can sustain the challenges now.

5.

6.

7. Colorado Springs Utilities rates have been an increasing burden on ratepayers. What is your plan to manage Colorado Springs Utilities rates, in your capacity as a board member of Colorado Springs Utilities, so they are affordable for all citizens —from the poorest among us to the wealthiest? (250 words maximum) To learn more and understand what constitutes the need for a hike or a decrease. I am so eager to learn about our city utilizes from the inside. I will be a string advocate for keeping rates low. We cannot continue to have a monopoly on utilities and continue to affect the poorest amongst us with no other option.

8. The Martin Drake Coal Power Plant was decommissioned 9 years earlier than required. Was that the correct decision? Please explain. (200 words maximum) I am a fan of decommissioning and happy it was early; however, I want to listen and respect the opinions of the Mill Street neighborhood. They have had to deal with the fumes for all these years. They have a stake it what Drake becomes, and I want to help tell their story on council and create the conditions where we can compromise and move forward.

9. What expenditures in the Colorado Springs City budget can be reduced or eliminated? As a future City Council member, will you vote against an increased budget? Will you ask for reductions for any specific departments or expenditures? Please explain. (250 words

maximum) I will vote for more money for parks and land and open space purchases, for improving roads, for correcting infrastructure. We need to be responsible with taxpayers' money, and I believe that also supporting those that protect us only makes good sense, therefore I would be in favor of increasing those budgets as well. But it doesn't have to be all taxes; we have some serious overspends that we can look at re allocating.

10. What expenditures in the Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) budget should be reduced or eliminated? As a future board member of CSU, will you commit to making those cuts? (250 words maximum) I cannot answer these questions yet. I can only surmise that there are cuts that can be made. I look very forward to learning all the things I need to know to be an effective council person.

11. What would you consider responsible growth in Colorado Springs? Examples might include infill, expansion to the east, annexation, etc. (200 words maximum) I support responsible smart growth which includes infill, annexation (possibly) density, rebates and tax credits to homeowners to remodel their unused spaces and possibly earn money . we need to constantly ask and answer the hard questions, will our infrastructure handle the growth , for we have the water , etc.

12. Are you willing to recuse yourself from a vote in the event you have a conflict of interest? (200 words maximum) absolutely!!!

13. Optional: Anything else you want voters to know about what you would do if elected? (200 words maximum)
    Thank you for this opportunity., My cell is available for a call or text anytime anyday 719-499-8850.