

County Supervisor, District 5: Dean Wilson

May 21, 2022



1. How should the homeless crisis be addressed? Should Del Norte County buy more motels to convert to homeless shelters?

To control the homeless crisis, Del Norte County needs to model successful programs. One such program provides a Designated Area for the homeless to stay, thus giving law enforcement the ability to remove the homeless from “undesigned areas” and thereby control where the homeless can rest. I do not support county purchase of shelters or hotels.

2. What can be done to improve morale within the Sheriff’s department? How can the Sheriff’s department more effectively recruit, hire and retain experienced deputies?

It is not more money, but accountability and leadership that is needed. The Sheriff’s Office has become a toxic work environment where lack of discipline and accountability have led to a breakdown in standards and high turnover. It is now suffering from a lack of experienced deputies and staffing shortages.

3. What can be done to avoid the “catch and release” back into the community of criminal defendants before their matters are resolved by the courts? Should the 48-bed Juvenile Hall – with only one or two persons in custody – be repurposed as an adult facility?

Our jail has a capacity for 142 inmates, but we have a District Attorney that won’t prosecute low level criminal offenders and COVID rules that won’t allow for holding those arrested for non-violent crimes. Juvenile hall should not be converted, but it should be closed. Is it the best way to spend \$2.5 million per year?

4. What is the most pressing problem in your supervisorial district? What do you propose as a solution?

Crime and the homeless are the most common concerns I hear from the citizens in District 5. By creating a Designated Area (see answer No.1), law enforcement can then enforce laws prohibiting homeless camps outside of that area; the District Attorney can prosecute offenders; and homeless services can focus on the Designated Area to encourage use.

5. How can Del Norte County become a place where young people want to remain, to raise a family, to start a career, and become a vital part of this community? What will you do to bring about these changes?

Opportunities and Love of Community are vital, along with living wage jobs and reasonable starter homes, especially for young people. We need to aggressively promote the trades: plumbers, electricians, contractors, farmers and ranchers. Our high school should be joining with Humboldt Poly Tech on computer education and engineering.

6. Should Del Norte County impose additional controls and fees on short-term rentals? Should short-term rentals be confined to commercial or multi-family zones, or to owner-occupied properties?

No, we need to promote development. We need to make the process simpler and easy for projects to move quickly. Government needs to get out of the way of progress and be an asset and not an impediment. We need to help in the development of starter homes and affordable rentals by reducing regulations.

7. Should Del Norte County turn down state and federal grants with strings attached that dictate how local government must solve local problems? Under what circumstances should Del Norte County confront problems without outside funding?

My experience as administrator allowed me to evaluate the costs and benefits of available grants, choosing those best suited for our situation. For example, I often refused grants that required staffing commitments which would reduce patrol deputy time in our communities. Other than emergencies, grants that require ongoing commitment of resources need to be avoided.

8. Should the Measure R sales tax increase be repealed? Why or why not?

I did not vote for Measure R and I firmly believe the government should live within its means. In these inflationary times, if Measure R is repealed, it would be wise to develop two versions of next year's budget, one with and one without Measure R funding.

9. Briefly explain, Why are you the best candidate for a seat on the Board of Supervisors representing your district?

As Sheriff, I navigated the department for 12 years through many challenges, but came out stronger. Serving as your County Supervisor, I will prioritize listening, learning, and planning for you, in order to have a government responsive to your needs. I will use both my government and private business experience to benefit our district and open up opportunities.

