

Candidate name:

Mike Sharp

Candidate Committee Name:

Sharp for Sheriff

Campaign Address, Web site and Phone:

4049 Central St
Kansas City, MO 64111

www.sharpforsheriff.com

(816) 561-7555

Office Sought:

Jackson County Sheriff

Campaign Treasurer/Deputy Treasurer

Robert Martin/William Session

Education

Graduate of from Lee's Summit High School in 1977.

Graduated of Central Missouri State University in 1981,

Bachelor's of Science in Fire Science and a minor in Criminal Justice.

Civic and Political Experience

Lee's Summit Volunteer Firefighter - 4 years

Kansas City Police Department – 26 years (24 years Reserve and 2 years full-time, 8 years Homicide Detective)

Due to constraints placed on Kansas City Police Officers by state law, my prior political experience is limited.

Member of:

Summit Democratic Club, Lee's Summit Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Lee's Summit Main Street Inc., Ararat Shrine, Albert Pike Blue Lodge #219 in Independence.

Previous Elective Office Sought:

None

Anticipated Campaign Budget:

\$145,000

What policies would you set for your deputies to assist undocumented immigrant victims of domestic violence?

First off all, I believe in Equal Justice under Law, so my deputies will treat all people with respect and professionalism.

With regard to domestic violence, I would use the federal Violence Against Women Act as a model. It preserves the confidentiality of immigration status when a person reports domestic violence to the police. My deputies will respond to domestic violence victims with strength and compassion. Period.

I don't believe, however, that local law enforcement officers and agencies should act as federal immigration agents. On the local level, we need to work to create and maintain a trust with immigrant communities. Trust helps to build a feeling of personal security in neighborhoods and can be crucial in combating criminals who traffic in human beings and illegal drugs.

Do the demographics of the Jackson County Sheriff's Department reflect those of the changing community in Jackson County?

No, the current Department staff does not appear to reflect the demographic make-up of the county. The complexion of the Department will change over time as we expand the number of Sheriff's deputies by hiring more part-time personnel. I believe we can benefit from a significant number of highly trained officers who retire from major municipal police forces in the county every year at a relatively young age. Because many of those early retirees come from municipal police forces that already are more diverse than the Sheriff's Department, I think I will be in a good position to create a more diverse work force, one that better represents the changing population of Jackson County.

What kind of cultural and/or sensitivity training would you provide officers for dealing with non-English speaking residence of Jackson County?

I believe this question is closely related to my answer in response to Question 2. Our first goal should be to expand the population of deputies to more closely reflect the Jackson County's demographic make-up. This can be achieved quickly and in a cost effective manner by expanding the use of part-time deputies recruited from Kansas City and other municipalities.

If I am elected, my transition team will review the current training materials used by the Department and we will consult education and training experts to determine whether those

materials need amendment or editing. We might also go to the county legislature and ask for a modest appropriation to reward deputies and employees who learn a second language – an idea that all of Jackson County government might benefit from.

I also plan to establish a series of community councils to advise the Sheriff's Department on training and community affairs on an ongoing basis.

Do you support the right of public employees to collectively bargain?

I support the right of public employees to bargain collectively in Missouri. I do believe that because public service has to be held to a higher standard, there must be work rules that provide reasonable protections to the public health and safety; however, that should not rule out a workers' basic right to collective bargaining.

Do you support a woman's right to choose to terminate a pregnancy?

As a law enforcement officer, I will not be making decisions about a woman's right to choose. But in answer to your question, I believe that abortion should be legal, safe and rare. Should the issue ever come before the Sheriff's Department, I will enforce the laws in accordance with the Supreme Court.

What is the most challenging issues facing Democrats today?

I think Will Rogers was the one that said "I am not a member of any organized political party: I am a Democrat." I think we spend way too much time trying to figure out other factions of the Party and why we shouldn't get along with "them." Our tendency to fight amongst ourselves is the Republicans' best tool for keeping our core voters home on election day.

What role, if any, does faith for elected officials?

I believe that faith, or the lack of faith, is a personal issue for every citizen. I am more concerned with an official's integrity and personal commitment to do the right thing for the people he or she serves.

What can Democrats do to stem the erosion of support from Labor Unions? From suburban and rural communities?

I grew up in a rural suburb and now I live in a newly-developed section of an urban city, and I have considered myself a Democrat all my life.

I think we need to lead by example to attract new voters and new leaders to the Democratic Party. We need to cultivate and nominate Democratic candidates who are smart, energetic and unafraid. I think that aggressive leadership attracts more votes than strategies that pander to one issue or another.

If I win the August primary I don't plan to fold up my tents and wait for January. My supporters and I will pitch in wholeheartedly to get out the vote for Democrats, big and small, in November.

I am tempted to say that we should just clone Kevin Hennosy, who is my campaign field director, but I oppose cloning.

Do you, or have, you ever supported placing limits on a woman's right to choose? If so, explain.

No

Have you ever endorsed a Republican for office? Yes or No. If yes, please designate which candidates.

No. I have never endorsed a Republican for office. I want to state that I come from a Democratic family and have always considered myself a Democrat. However, as a Kansas City police officer I could not engage in partisan political activity; therefore, I have never endorsed any candidate for public office.

Do you or have you ever supported right to work laws? If yes, please explain.

No

Do you or have you ever supported the right of public employees to collectively bargain? If no, please explain?

Yes, I support the right of public employees to bargain collectively in Missouri. I do believe that because public service has to be held to a higher standard, there must be work rules that provide reasonable protections to the public health and safety; however, that should not take away a workers' basic right to collective bargaining.

In addition, I support the concept of extending OSHA coverage to the public sector.

Please list and explain your top three priorities if elected:

1. Regional cooperation and coordination

The Jackson County Sheriff's Department should be the premier law enforcement agency in the county. I believe the sheriff should take the initiative to seek out problems that can be best addressed on a regional basis. Often, this is a question of cooperation; such as, working out an agreement with the Kansas City Police Department (KCPD) to allow the Jackson County Sheriff's department to answer calls in Kansas City when the KCPD has deployed all its field resources – a condition known as being "blacked out." In other cases the Sheriff's Department should play a coordinating role to provide assets and services that serve the law enforcement needs of the entire county. For example, the Sheriff's Department should coordinate the countywide

communications system. In addition, the Sheriff's Department should establish an area division that spreads the cost of operation over the entire county, which benefits from its operation. This will eliminate the need for Kansas City to maintain an aging helicopter, which basically serves the entire county now. I am also ready to offer ideas and support for a "regional jail." An integrated approach to detention and criminal justice will increase safety, reduce costs and cut down on environmental waste and impact.

2. Community outreach

People should know who their sheriff is. If elected, I will participate in community activities and organizations, and not just in election years. I enjoy interaction with the public and participation in public events. I believe in building a bond of trust between law enforcement and neighborhoods, which ultimately improves public safety.

A law enforcement officer has no party registration when they respond to a call for help. However, as a Democratic elected official I believe this kind of outreach benefits the entire party in the eyes of voting citizens all across Jackson County.

3. A "Sharp" Administration

I have met payrolls and made arrests, and I can tell you that neither is a lot of fun. But I am proud to have earned success as a businessperson, and to have served faithfully and diligently as a law enforcement officer.

I look forward to working with the Sheriff's Deputies and the civilian staff. I believe we can build on Sheriff Phillip's work to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism of the Department. I will work constructively with the collective bargaining unit and I would like to see wider membership in the union. Still, as with any contract negotiation, I will be independent and respectful in negotiations and represent the interests of the citizens of Jackson County.

I am committed to taking an active role in the public policy process. That includes operating my day-to-day office in the Jackson County Courthouse in Kansas City. I have been building respectful relationships with members of the County Legislature and the County Executive's Office as well as local representatives to the state legislature. I believe those relationships are critical to securing the revenue and policy support necessary to best serve the people of Jackson County.