

Form Summary

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Campaign Committee Name	Hoheisel for Wichita
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Website	http://www.hoheiselforwichita.com
If elected, will you be willing to meet with Local 135 leadership periodically to answer questions or address concerns?	Yes
If elected, will you request information from Local 135 from both City Administration and Local 135 to better understand and fire safety concerns?	Absolutely. Nobody knows what's going on and what resources are needed better than those with boots on the ground.
The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) sets national standards for fire service to protect the public and make fire fighters as safe as possible when they do their job. Services must be properly prioritized and maintained. Public Safety is a basic service and core function of any municipal government. The City of Wichita has grown, and the number of emergency response needs with it. Yet the Wichita Fire Department's has remained relatively static. Wichita Fire Fighters will always do everything possible to respond to the needs of anyone during an emergency. That means as national standards continue to fall behind, injuries increase. If elected, will you commit to working with us to improve our compliance with these national standards? Why or why not?	Yes. There is absolutely no excuse to fall behind standards when the lives and safety of those who protect us are at risk. If Wichita Firefighters are willing to risk their safety and lives for us, then we should reciprocate. I believe our community agrees, no matter what the cost to taxpayers.

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NFPA 1710 sets staffing standards which includes at least four (4) fire fighters on every engine company and ladder company and five (5) fire fighters on ladder companies in high density areas. These staffing standards are based on studies and determined by a consortium of participants including members of the fire service, municipalities business, and industry professionals. These staffing standards are minimum standards that ensure timely, safe, effective, and appropriate service levels for communities. If elected, would you support the creation of a plan that utilizes staff to better meet the NFPA safety goals of five-person ladder companies where indicated, and preserve four-person staffing on fire engines and fire trucks in Wichita?

Yes. These standards are set by those with experience in the area, and should be listened to above anybody else.

If data collected during your term tells us that Wichita needs additional fire fighters to meet these goals, would you support the creation of a plan to address those shortages?

It is already apparent that we've fallen behind as far as staffing goes in the firefighter to resident ratio. Public safety and the safety of those risking their lives for me and my family is a top priority to me, and I will fight to bring us up to where we should be.

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted everyone in our community. Throughout this crisis, Wichita Fire Fighters have not wavered and continue to demonstrate their commitment to serving our city on the front line. When a Fire Fighter experiences possible COVID-19 symptoms themselves, they must rely on their own personal sick leave. If elected, would you support policy that provides leave for testing or mandated quarantine after a work-related Covid exposure? Why or why not?

Absolutely. If you get exposed to Covid by doing your job, you should not be expected to dip into your personal leave. We ask you to do the job, and our civilian leadership is responsible for putting you in those situations through our funding and appointments. It is our responsibility to ensure your safety. Firefighters should not be penalized for a failure on our part.

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In a council-manager government, an elected city council serves as the city's primary legislative body and appoints a chief executive officer called a city manager to oversee day-to-day municipal operations, to draft a budget, and to implement and enforce the council's policy and legislative initiatives. The city-manager, city council, and mayor work together to enact budgets, to draft and enforce legislation, to provide city services, and to oversee city departments and appoint of departmental heads. The city-manager is not an elected position. Rather, the holder of this office serves at the pleasure of the council, which retains the legal right to dismiss and replace the city-manager. Do you believe it is appropriate for a City Council member to push for changes in a proposed budget from the City Manager's office? Why or why not?

Absolutely. Firefighters are doing a selfless and dangerous job. The fact that they are risking their lives for little pay already shows their character, and they should be trusted to advocate for what is necessary to keep themselves and Wichita's residents safe. Members of the City Council are the ones elected by the people to make the hard choices, and the fact that they pawn hard decisions off to an un-elected City Manager is an abdication of duty by my eyes.

How do you see your role, if elected, in guiding budget spending?

I will pound the table and go to bat for the WFD. I will pursue a public campaign to drive public opinion on the matter until funding is back to an acceptable level. If the City Manager refuses to cooperate, then I will seek to dismiss them and look for another who's values line up with what I believe are those of Wichita, values that support our first responders.

If elected, will you prioritize public safety in this process?

Yes

Recently, the City of Wichita adopted a minimum wage standard for all entry level employees of \$15 dollars an hour. While we applaud the city's commitment to new employees and their families, the entry level wage for an incoming Fire Fighter has not increased. Do you believe an entry level wage of \$15.54 an hour is a fair wage for a new Fire Fighter? Why or why not?

Absolutely not. There is no reason someone risking their lives for me and my family should be making barely anything more than a waitress in Seattle or someone pushing the broom on a construction site. I value labor and hard work, but certain jobs should be valued higher, and Firefighting is definitely one of them. I believe the public would agree with me if this is pressed before the public.

We believe collective bargaining is a necessary and useful tool that helps keep our city competitive, increases fire fighter and public safety, and helps to protect all public safety employees. We also believe arbitration provides for a fair mechanism to settle disputes and is a time-tested and transparent process. If elected, will you support and respect the bargaining and arbitration rights of Wichita Fire Fighters and other City of Wichita employees, at the city and state level?

Yes

