

Boundary County Clerk

	Pamela Barton	Kimberly Kichenmaster	Stacie Watts
<p>1. What is your name, what office are you running for and why are you running for this position?</p>	<p>No Response Received</p>	<p>My name is Kim Kichenmaster and I am running for Boundary County Clerk as a step of faith and obedience, believing that God calls ordinary people to serve in places that matter.</p> <p>I feel called to serve in this role at the intersection of government and the people. Whether it’s our courts, our elections, public records or county operations, I believe this office should operate with accountability, transparency, and a heart to serve.</p>	<p>My name is Stacie Watts, and I am running for Boundary County Clerk.</p> <p>I am running because I believe public service is a calling that requires integrity, accountability, and a commitment to serve others well. The Clerk’s office plays a vital role in our community, from overseeing elections and maintaining public records to ensuring financial accuracy and transparency.</p> <p>I bring experience in county government, financial services, and leadership in complex operations. I understand the importance of accuracy, consistency, and public trust in this role.</p> <p>As a Christian, my faith guides how I serve. I believe in doing what is right, even when no one is watching, and treating every person with fairness and respect.</p> <p>I am committed to serving Boundary County with professionalism and a servant’s heart.</p>
<p>2. How could the Clerk’s office be improved? Please provide your top 2-3 ideas.</p>	<p>No Response Received</p>	<p>As a start, I believe the public would benefit by updating the Boundary County website to improve access to information, county activities, forms and applications, and secure public record access.</p> <p>Good business requires careful evaluation, and a clear understanding of what is already working well before making changes. It is important to learn current processes, listen to staff and citizens, and identify opportunities for improvement where needed.</p>	<p>The Clerk’s office plays a vital role in serving the public, and I believe there are always opportunities to strengthen service and efficiency.</p> <p>First, focusing on customer service and accessibility by ensuring every interaction is respectful, helpful, and efficient can improve the overall experience for our community.</p> <p>Second, enhancing communication with the public through clear, consistent updates—such as a regular “Clerk’s Communiqué”—would help residents better understand processes, timelines, and services.</p> <p>Third, continuing to look for process improvements and cross-training opportunities can help create consistency, reduce delays, and ensure continuity of service.</p> <p>These improvements build on the foundation already in place while focusing on transparency, efficiency, and service to the community.</p>

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<p>3. Election integrity has become a serious concern for voters. How will you preserve election integrity to the w highest level?</p>	<p>No Response Received</p>	<p>Election integrity is essential to public trust. Idaho already has strong safeguards in place, including paper ballots, offline (by code) certified tabulators, voter ID requirements, audits, and poll watchers.</p> <p>As County Clerk, I will build on that foundation by ensuring consistent processes, thorough training, and strong accountability at every level. I will prioritize transparency by welcoming observers and clearly communicating how our elections are conducted and verified.</p> <p>I also support reviewing areas such as voter affidavits, poll watcher guidelines, air-gapped machines, write-in ballot procedures, and voter roll maintenance to ensure consistency, transparency, and public confidence.</p> <p>My commitment to stewardship of elections is simple: follow the law, uphold best practices, and work to ensure every voter can trust that their vote is secure and accurately counted.</p>	<p>Election integrity is preserved through consistency, transparency, and accountability. First, I will ensure strict adherence to Idaho election laws and established procedures so every voter is treated equally and every ballot is handled correctly.</p> <p>Second, maintaining clear chain of custody and security of ballots, equipment, and data at every stage is essential. Documented processes and safeguards protect the integrity of the system.</p> <p>Third, transparency and communication with the public are key. Helping voters understand how elections are conducted builds confidence and trust.</p> <p>Idaho’s use of voter-marked paper ballots provides a reliable, auditable record, ensuring accuracy and allowing for recounts if needed.</p> <p>My commitment is to uphold these standards with professionalism, consistency, and integrity.</p>
<p>4. As AI continues to advance in capabilities and is more frequently being used by hackers, what would you do to protect election infrastructure against fraud?</p>	<p>No Response Received</p>	<p>Election infrastructure includes everything involved in running an election: laws, people, processes, equipment, and systems that allow ballots to be cast, counted, and certified securely.</p> <p>Artificial intelligence and cybersecurity threats are constantly changing, but Idaho’s election system is built on strong safeguards and clear election code that limits outside interference.</p> <p>The biggest risks today are often related to people and information, like misinformation, phishing attempts, and communication confusion. That’s where awareness and strong procedures matter most.</p> <p>As Clerk, my focus would be on the parts I directly steward: well-trained election workers, clear and consistent procedures, and strong chain-of-custody practices. Just as important is clear communication so the public has accurate information they can trust.</p>	<p>Protecting election infrastructure requires strong cybersecurity, controlled access, and proven safeguards. I will work with state and federal partners to ensure systems are secure, updated, and regularly audited.</p> <p>Limiting access to authorized personnel, using secure authentication, and maintaining detailed activity logs are essential to preventing unauthorized use. Where applicable, maintaining systems that are not connected to the internet reduces exposure to external threats.</p> <p>Ongoing training for staff is critical, especially as AI-driven threats like phishing and impersonation become more advanced.</p> <p>Most importantly, Idaho’s use of voter-marked paper ballots provides a secure, auditable record that allows results to be verified independently of technology.</p> <p>My focus will be on prevention, preparedness, and maintaining public trust through secure and transparent processes.</p>

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<p>5. Our county is growing very rapidly, where do you see we need to improve election infrastructure and what are your suggestions?</p>	<p>No Response Received</p>	<p>Boundary County is in the top three for growth in Idaho since 2020 - a whopping 16%.</p> <p>Key opportunities to manage election infrastructure growth well:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Strategic poll location and capacity planning * Stronger, standardized training for workers * Improved transparency and public communication * Clear, consistent chain of custody and documentation * Long-term resource stewardship and planning <p>As our county continues to grow, maintaining election integrity comes down to staying consistent in our processes while wisely managing our capacity. Growth brings more voters, but it doesn't always bring more resources - so it's important to be mindful stewards of what we've been given and look for ways to manage well without compromising standards.</p>	<p>As our county grows, election infrastructure must grow with it to ensure accessibility, efficiency, and public confidence.</p> <p>First, we should evaluate polling locations and capacity to reduce wait times and better serve expanding population areas.</p> <p>Second, investing in recruitment and training of poll workers is essential to maintain accuracy and consistency during higher turnout elections.</p> <p>Third, continuing to assess equipment needs and workflow processes will help ensure timely ballot processing and reporting.</p> <p>Clear communication with voters—especially around registration, absentee voting, and polling information—will also be increasingly important.</p> <p>With my experience managing complex operations and planning for growth, I am prepared to help ensure our election system remains secure, efficient, and responsive to a growing county.</p>
<p>6. What is your preference: paper ballots or electronic ballots? Why do you believe this method is best?</p>	<p>No Response Received</p>	<p>Definitely paper ballots are best - leaves a paper trail for audit purposes. Provides the ability for risk limited audits and enables eyes on the process.</p>	<p>I support Idaho's current system of voter-marked paper ballots. Paper ballots provide a reliable, physical record of each vote that can be audited and recounted if necessary, which is essential for accuracy and public confidence.</p> <p>This method combines the security of a tangible record with the efficiency of modern tabulation systems. If questions arise, the paper ballot remains the official source of truth.</p> <p>I believe this approach offers the best balance of security, transparency, and accountability. It ensures that elections are both efficient and verifiable, which is critical to maintaining trust in the process.</p> <p>As County Clerk, my priority would be to uphold and properly administer this system with consistency, care, and integrity.</p>

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7. Do you support or oppose requirements for developers to pay for community infrastructure?	No Response Received	<p>This decision is not within the authority of the County Clerk. However, I do believe developers should contribute to the cost of community infrastructure.</p> <p>Requiring this helps ensure growth is fair and sustainable, and it prevents the financial burden from being shifted onto existing residents. At the same time, in smaller communities like Bonners Ferry, it's important to be mindful that these requirements don't unintentionally disadvantage small, local developers in favor of larger ones.</p> <p>I believe there are creative, balanced approaches that can support responsible growth while still making it possible for smaller developers to succeed and contribute to our community.</p>	<p>As County Clerk, my role is to administer the duties of the office—elections, records, and financial accountability—not to set development policy.</p> <p>That said, I believe growth should be responsible and sustainable. As our community expands, it's important that infrastructure keeps pace so that services remain strong and taxpayers are not overburdened.</p> <p>Decisions about developer requirements should be made through a transparent process by the appropriate elected officials, with input from the community.</p> <p>My commitment is to ensure that any decisions made are accurately recorded, properly administered, and communicated clearly to the public.</p>
8. In your opinion, what does the Clerk provide in terms of checks and balances in regard to the other elected officials?	No Response Received	<p>The Clerk has a unique responsibility to hold other offices accountable through accurate record keeping, transparent reporting and financial oversight.</p> <p>This includes recording all commissioner decisions and actions, serving as a neutral record keeper for the judicial side and protecting process integrity so cases are handled fairly and consistently.</p> <p>On the financial side, the clerk provides check and balance on all officials by ensuring spending aligns with the budget. All expense claims are reviewed and recorded by the clerks office.</p> <p>The Clerk provides a check on the Treasurer by separating the handling of money from the approval and documentation of it.</p> <p>Lastly the Clerk is in charge of elections and helps manage and protect the process by which VOTERS can hold every other office accountable.</p>	<p>The County Clerk plays a vital role in maintaining checks and balances through accuracy, transparency, and accountability.</p> <p>As Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners, the Clerk ensures official actions, budgets, and decisions are properly recorded and accessible to the public. As ex officio Auditor, the Clerk reviews claims to ensure they are lawful, properly documented, and within budget before payment is issued, helping safeguard public funds.</p> <p>In elections, the Clerk serves as a neutral administrator, following the law and established procedures to ensure fairness and consistency.</p> <p>While the Clerk does not set policy, the office upholds integrity by maintaining clear records, ensuring compliance with legal requirements, and providing transparency.</p> <p>This role supports trust and accountability across all elected offices.</p>

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9. How would you utilize the budget that you manage while being fiscally responsible?	No Response Received	Responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars means using public money carefully and for its intended purpose, making sure it is needed, reasonable, and tied to the work of the office. It means staying within budget, keeping clear records for every expense, and looking for practical ways to reduce waste while still getting the job done well and serving the public effectively.	<p>As County Clerk and ex officio Auditor, I would manage the budget with a focus on accountability, efficiency, and responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars while supporting fiscal responsibility across all departments.</p> <p>I would ensure spending aligns with statutory requirements and office priorities, carefully reviewing claims to confirm expenditures are lawful, properly documented, and within approved budgets before payment is issued.</p> <p>I would also look for efficiencies through process improvements, cross-training, and thoughtful use of resources to reduce unnecessary costs.</p> <p>Maintaining accurate, transparent financial records and clear reporting allows elected officials and the public to see how funds are used.</p> <p>While others set budgets, the Clerk provides an essential check to ensure compliance, transparency, and accountability.</p>
10. What is your view on eliminating the property tax in favor of a higher sales tax?	No Response Received	<p>Setting tax policy is outside the authority of the County Clerk.</p> <p>While eliminating property tax may sound appealing especially for homeowners on fixed income, it would shift the burden in ways that may not be sustainable for county services. Many purchases happen outside of Boundary County, which means a sales tax alone would not reliably fund local needs.</p> <p>In general, I believe a balanced approach would be best, using a combination of property taxes, sales tax, and exploring other local revenue through natural resources.</p>	<p>As County Clerk, my role is to administer the duties of the office, not to set tax policy. Decisions about property or sales tax are made at the state and local legislative levels.</p> <p>That said, any tax structure should be fair, sustainable, and provide stable funding for essential public services. Property taxes offer predictability for local governments, while sales taxes can fluctuate with economic conditions.</p> <p>Any proposed shift would need to be carefully evaluated for its impact on residents, local services, and long-term financial stability.</p> <p>My commitment is to ensure that whatever policies are in place are administered accurately, transparently, and in accordance with the law.</p>

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11. As the county's population continues to grow, do you believe the Clerk's office currently has sufficient funds to operate efficiently?	No Response Received	I am unable to answer this question appropriately without further research.	<p>As our county grows, it's important to regularly evaluate whether the Clerk's office has the resources needed to operate efficiently and serve the public well.</p> <p>Growth often brings increased workload in elections, records, and financial responsibilities, so staffing, training, and equipment should be assessed to ensure they keep pace with demand.</p> <p>At the same time, fiscal responsibility is essential. Any request for additional resources should be supported by clear data, demonstrated need, and a commitment to efficiency.</p> <p>My approach would be to carefully evaluate current processes, identify opportunities to improve efficiency, and make thoughtful, justified recommendations when additional resources are truly necessary.</p> <p>The goal is to balance responsible budgeting with maintaining accurate, timely, and reliable service for our community.</p>
12. Is there anything in your personal, business, or career life that would be a conflict of interest in your ability to serve the people of this county?	No Response Received	No, I do not have any personal, business, or professional interests that would create a conflict of interest in serving as County Clerk. I am not running for office for a title but simply to serve the people of Boundary County with fairness, transparency, and consistency.	<p>I am not aware of any conflicts of interest that would impact my ability to serve the people of this county.</p> <p>Throughout my career, I have worked in roles that require integrity, confidentiality, and adherence to strict ethical and regulatory standards. I understand the importance of maintaining public trust and avoiding even the appearance of a conflict.</p> <p>If any potential conflict were to arise, I would address it promptly and transparently, following all applicable laws and ethical guidelines.</p> <p>My commitment is to serve with honesty, professionalism, and accountability, always putting the interests of the public first.</p>

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13. What is your background and why do you believe it qualifies you for this position?	No Response Received	<p>I bring over 20 years of experience in administration leadership, and data management across healthcare, hospitality, and retail, where I trained teams, managed operations, and ensured accountability.</p> <p>I am an Executive Assistant and Credentialing Specialist, managing sensitive records, compliance, and verification processes. I serve as Secretary for a hospital tax district, supporting budgets, agendas, and public meeting records, strengthening my understanding of transparency and oversight.</p> <p>My background includes office management, bookkeeping, and financial reconciliation, along with experience as a database and web developer focused on user-friendly systems. I have also been Operations and Planning Officers on large environmental projects and served in Search and Rescue communications. I am an Idaho Notary Public</p>	<p>I bring a unique combination of county government experience, financial expertise, and leadership in highly regulated, detail-driven environments.</p> <p>I served as a Revenue Deputy in the Boundary County Clerk's office, giving me hands-on experience with county processes, financial tracking, and public service. In my current role as a Senior Service Specialist with Edward Jones, I support complex financial operations in a regulated industry that demands accuracy, accountability, and trust.</p> <p>My background also includes managing multimillion-dollar budgets and operations at Medtronic, along with experience in veterinary medicine and liquor control and wine shipping logistics—roles requiring strict compliance and precision.</p> <p>Throughout my career, I have worked where accuracy matters and the margin for error is small. I am prepared to bring that same level of professionalism and leadership to this office.</p>