

# MEET THE CANDIDATES: PART TWO

During this election season, the *Crested Butte News* will be asking the candidates for Crested Butte Town Council and mayor to answer questions related to issues in the community. We are asking that they keep their answers to no more than 600 words.

Readers are encouraged to email us a question they think needs to be addressed. Send your suggestions to

editorial@crestedbuttenews.com.

And do not forget the *Crested Butte News* Candidate's Forum on Sunday, October 22. We will begin at 5 p.m. with the two tax issues on the Crested Butte ballot: the Crested Butte Fire Protection District request for a mill levy increase and the town of Crested Butte asking voters to approve an additional excise tax on short-term vacation

rentals in town. Everyone is invited to come in person and ask questions. Candidates should take the stage shortly before 6 p.m.

Ballots will be mailed out on October 16 and they must be returned by the official election day of November 7.

—Mark Reaman



**JIM SCHMIDT**  
MAYORAL CANDIDATE

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

The Brush Creek project does not correctly respond to the direction of the Gunnison Valley Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment calls for an addition of

93 rental units in the North Valley area plus another 29 in the Middle Valley (Crested Butte South) area. The proposed project has almost twice the units suggested. There is no mix between rental and for sale units as called for. The density is much too high.

The process has been backward from the start. It was initiated by Gatesco's proposal to the county last December. We should have had open meetings at that time to find out what the public expected on the land. And, at the least, we should have had meetings to guide Gatesco into shaping their plan after the RFP presentations. This was strongly suggested by the town and myself but voted down by the other partners. There was no opportunity to suggest to Gatesco any refining of their project.

I am very concerned about the sale of the land before the final county meetings. I see too many times where the project might fail and possibly any deed restrictions might be dropped. A lease of the property rather than a sale, a tool that has been used in other resort communities, would keep it as affordable housing.

We, the town, have asked the other partners to slow down the process. We have been outvoted. We must continue to analyze the project and its possible impacts on our town and voice strongly our concerns at the county Planning Commission and commissioners' hearings.

In a perfect world, I would ask Gatesco to withdraw their application and start over.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

The town is addressing the affordable housing issue. We have a five-year plan to build more housing in Paradise Park and possibly along Butte Avenue if the Cypress annexation goes through. The town has about 23 percent of all housing units having deed restrictions. This is much higher than the county or Mt. Crested Butte. If the Brush Creek parcel is approved with only rental units that may change the mix of housing we would want in town, more for sale units and less or even zero rental units. I would like for us

to increase the density of the Paradise Park lots. If the lot is set for a single-family house, let's consider a for-sale duplex. If a duplex is called for, let's consider making it a triplex.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

Short-term rentals have a big impact on locals in Crested Butte. The parking, garbage collection, noise, etc., and impacts of a commercial operation in a residential zone, effect the property rights of those living next door. The advent of cheap and plentiful advertising of STRs on the internet has accelerated the change over from long-term rentals to STRs. This along with other forces such as Marcellina Condos (44 three-bedroom units) dropping out of the rental pool has led to our housing crisis.

The first STR ordinance, which deals with inspections, limits on number of occupants, a person to call within an hour, smoke alarms, etc., is very solid and might need only a few minor revisions. The second STR ordinance, which deals

with who can STR their property was a fair compromise of restrictions. I feel strongly that it addressed the concerns of primary residents and property owners and the citizens of town. STRs have been addressed in many different towns of all different sizes. Solutions are varied and I believe we have picked the best of the solutions. I am sure the council will evaluate the results in a year or two.

**Best pet you ever had?**

Laddie, our family dog when I was in college.

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

5:15 on Friday I'm either at work or one of the fine houses of refreshment in Crested Butte.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

Yes.



**PAUL MERCK**  
MAYORAL CANDIDATE

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or**

**mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

The project has many positive aspects: The financial planning (in theory), use of local architects and engineers and an overall desire to meet a known lack of affordable rental units in the upper Gunnison Valley.

Some project unknowns and possible downsides are as follows: should the property be transferred to the developers before land use approvals? Crowding, traffic and safety are huge concerns. Is it too many units on too few acres? What are comparable density projects? Pitchfork is 100 mixed use units. Fifty-four units exist on one acre at Three Seasons. Who should provide project water and sewer needs, and more?

The process, well, that is unclear to many people unless they are directly involved financially, in the planning/approval phases or just really stay up to date on housing issues. We can all find

pros and cons in this land use so we must focus on solutions, even multiple alternative solutions based on these needs.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

Yes! The Crested Butte Town Council, Crested Butte town manager, Crested Butte senior staff, Mt. Crested Butte manager/staff and council, CBMR, Gunnison County manager/staff, the Gunnison Board of County Commissioners, the Gunnison Housing Authority, City of Gunnison, OVPP, Crested Butte South, multiple private entities are all working hard on this issue. We need to work together and find solutions. Please join this effort.

This is obviously a national dilemma with local and environmental

challenges. Planning and engineering necessary density, multifamily and various mixed uses around safety, function and financial sustainability are our goal.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

STRs impact everyone. Restrictions on personal property rights, housing costs and shortages, empty neighborhoods vs. economic boost, parking, and sharing or renting our fantastic piece of Colorado are a few key points making a decision challenging. The council will revisit this issue as ordinance 12, fees, and new restrictions are enforced. This information will help us understand this important issue more but a great solution for all is probably unobtainable.

**Best pet you ever had?**

Oscar, a newborn groundhog I

found hiking out of Watauga Gorge during college. He would follow me around on the farm in N.C. We both have returned to the wild.

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

I may be hiking, biking, working, going to a show or volunteering for a fundraiser. I could also be found sharing a beer with friends, driving to Gunnison for Friday night football and most likely discussing our community issues with most anyone.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

I celebrate the festival.



**CHRIS LADOULIS**  
MAYORAL CANDIDATE

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

I'm not ready to sell out.

While the 2016 Gunnison Valley

Housing Assessment highlighted the need for housing, it cautioned there is no "silver bullet" and urged development of a strategic housing plan. Nevertheless, we find ourselves scratching our heads, wondering why everything is moving so quickly, and our partners won't talk about it. We are again reacting to a developer-initiated proposal. Not simply an "affordable housing project," it establishes a new community of 650 to 800 residents just a few miles south of our Town. It relies on new growth to pay for our current problems: the cash flows from free-market rentals would presumably subsidize the construction of income-restricted units. This sets a remarkable precedent for how our valley manages growth, and it should not be taken lightly.

The process has been rushed, and our efforts to engage the public in Crested Butte have been dismissed. Our partners are willing to sign an agreement and convey title to land that we own collectively, before we can quantify the public benefit and costs. There are many long-term impacts to our com-

munity yet to be considered. I feel we have an obligation to protect the public interest and not rush into it. As mayor, I will insist that our partners honor our shared ownership in the property and consider our input before proceeding any further on the deal.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

We are not moving quickly enough.

We are still stuck in an outdated paradigm of subsidizing the construction of single-family homes and duplexes. There are several Town-owned parcels that could be viable affordable housing sites for rental. Since the approval of Anthracite Place in 2014, there has been no urgency to evaluate and develop these other parcels. I believe we must immediately create a 10-year plan to systematically address our housing needs within Town, revisit our approach, and put these parcels to use. In the \

absence of clear options on the horizon, we might be seduced into believing that large-scale developments are the "only answer."

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

Some limits were necessary, and the ordinance has not yet taken effect, so I think it would be too early to second-guess and revisit the regulations.

Locals definitely feel the impacts, and that's why we spent over a year as a Council discussing regulations to anticipate and mitigate them. These include the impacts of rental 'traffic' to adjacent homes in residential neighborhoods, which resulted in a licensing and inspection ordinance. The harder and more contentious question was if we as a Town should limit STRs, and if so how would we do it? We tried to balance the competing interests of those who felt any regulations would infringe on their private property rights, and those who felt that without restrictions our resi-

dential neighborhoods would become commercial zones. The Council chose to "cap" the days per year and number of allowed STRs, while expanding the allowed zones.

**Best pet you ever had?**

Django was with us 13 years, a handsome red and white Husky and our restaurant's namesake. Romeo has big paws to fill!

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

In a wine bar, at work, having been to a coffee shop on the way. Hopefully I'd been on a trail earlier that day!

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

I'm not telling! (Wouldn't that make the grumps come back?)



**RICHARD  
MACHEEHL  
(MOCK-O-MEL)  
COUNCIL  
CANDIDATE**

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

This project is massive for a town of our size, which will

have many implications, such as traffic among others. The Crested Butte community will be affected the most, much more so than Mt. Crested Butte or Gunnison.

Our focus should be on coming up with a solution that works for the majority of us. There won't be a perfect solution that makes everyone happy, but a solution we can all agree on is what we should be striving for.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

Our community needs to address affordable housing. Too many good people who work here in town are living out of their cars, camping or staying on someone's couch. My focus is going to be pushing hard for affordable housing.

**Do short term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do**

**you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way**

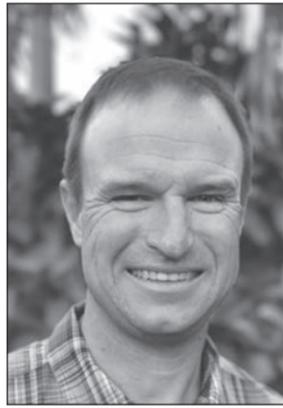
I do not believe STRs have been addressed to the satisfaction of the locals. The council should certainly revisit, hear from the locals and come up with a solid plan. We need to listen and protect our locals.

**Best pet you ever had?**

My son's dog, Biscuit. Four pounds of nothing but fur and total lap dog.

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

I'll likely be working at that time. But if I take the night off, then I'll likely be taking Kim and Nikolas out to eat.



**CHRIS HAVER  
COUNCIL CANDIDATE**

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

The process needed to be more

in the open from the beginning. It did go through the legally required steps. However, when we consider anything of this size, we need to put it out there for public opinion early on in a way that gets the community involved from the start. It will make the process a little harder but by doing so we could also be making the process easier later on by addressing the concerns up front.

Currently there are a lot of concerns and questions dealing with density, parking and mixed use. There is also the question of how much this project is going to cost town to maintain the public services for it. How will we cover the costs for expanding the school, which is already close to capacity, and the Mountain Express bus services for it? These are just a few of long-term impacts and costs that need to be addressed when considering any project of this size.

We need to encourage everyone, for and against the project, to come to the public work session on October 5. We also need to encourage everyone to take

part in the county process by voicing their opinions and concerns at the Gunnison County Planning Commission meeting on October 20. As we move forward with this as a town, we need to make sure all our concerns are properly addressed so that we can have a development that we can always be proud of.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

Town is addressing the affordable housing issue, but as with all things, there is always room to improve. We need to start working closely with our surrounding communities to plan long term solutions for affordable housing throughout our valley because as our community grows, this issue will not be going away. It will be a lot better if we have a plan in place now than trying to address it in the future when it will only become more challenging.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

STR has been a tough topic for our town as well as many towns across the country. I have had plenty of B&B guests complaining about the effects it has had in their own neighborhoods. On one side, we have the loss of long-term rental housing for locals and local home owners who work here; on the flip side, we now have more short-term rental housing available for vacationers who spend money in our town. It is important to have a balance. If we continue losing locals, we will lose our town's sense of community. This is a tough problem in many communities and I am yet to hear of the perfect solution. I do commend the work that our town government has put into this and I do believe that their solution is worth trying. That does not mean we cannot go back and work on it as we find problems, but I do believe that they have come up with a good starting point.

**Best pet you ever had?**

Lady. She was a tan Great Dane, my first pet, constant companion, nanny and protector.

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

I am where I always am at 5 p.m.: hosting my Bed & Breakfast Beer Tasting where I share a drink with my guests while discussing what adventures they had that day and where to go to dinner that night.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

This year, I am thankful to say, I had a lot to be grateful for and I did not have any major grumps, so I celebrated that instead.



**CANDICE BRADLEY  
COUNCIL CANDIDATE**

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide**

**the end result of that particular project?**

The current Brush Creek affordable housing project is unlike any other development in Gunnison Valley. The "housing project" seems to be missing the style and feel of Crested Butte. When I talk to my friends living five people packed in a two-bedroom apartment or the maintenance worker and family that are moving because it's too cold to camp anymore, I know we need housing. I don't think that should pressure us to get behind cheap, quickly assembled housing that might be uninhabitable in a few years because it's a poorly planned design. We should be focusing on building solid housing that will stand the test of time to remain an asset to our community for years to come. That being said, it is not located in Crested Butte, it is located

in Gunnison County. I think the best way I can guide the end result of this project, as a council person, is by encouraging the public to attend any county meetings regarding this project and oppose any cooperation with this project.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

We need more housing! There is so much more of a need today than there was yesterday and tomorrow isn't soon enough. The town isn't addressing this issue with the fervor in which they need to. I would suggest looking at some of the town-owned lots and exploring the possibilities of developing those into housing. I would also try to work with other

areas of the upper valley to develop a long-term focused goal to alleviate the housing crisis.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? Is so, in what way?**

Yes, STRs are adding to the housing crisis and adding to the over-tourism of Crested Butte. I know that STRs bring money into our community but the cost is much greater than the value. I think the council should really look at STRs that aren't owned by local community members and consider those what they are: commercial properties.

**Best pet you ever had?**

My dog, Skinny Minnie Motown. We have been through the best of

times and the worst of times. I believe I need her more than she needs me.

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I'm at work, because there is always someone working harder. I strive to better myself every day.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

I missed out on placing my grump in this year's fire. My three kids were more concerned with chanting "Burn the Grump!" and getting lost in the mob than actually writing any.



**TRACY SMITH  
MAYORAL CANDIDATE**

**Let's talk housing. What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

Building large buildings in small villages doesn't make sense. We owe the friends of Brush Creek, i.e., our local friends, a quality build. That corridor deserves 40 to 60 homes with 20 to 30 affordable lots. I believe that is the right approach. Those numbers are just guesses but better than a 240 units.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

As for affordable housing, I believe we're on the right track. I think we should consider three years residency instead of one year for qualifications. But more so, we really need a senior citizens building. I have played with some designs myself and a four-plex with a common area in the middle of 400-square-foot units is all the senior needs. There's a group of seniors in town who will likely be losing our rentals sooner than later that includes myself.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

I have lots of friends with STR rentals so I cannot be against it but I can be aware of the damaging costs to our community. The locals are truly paying the price.

**Best pet you ever had?**

Family dog named Mike.

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The trail or library. Maybe the archery range. I'm into traditional archery.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

I didn't put anything in the Grump but I went to storytelling and Tuck told a great R-rated story of the old days. It was fantastic.



### KENT COWHERD COUNCIL CANDIDATE

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

I am not in favor of the Brush Creek project as proposed. I sincerely hope that the future review of the sketch plan will respond to public input and will result in a much smaller-sized

project in density, scale and potential impacts to the upper end of the Valley.

The three largest buildings of the development are approximately 25,000 sq. ft., and as perceived together, would be about the same size as the Crested Butte Community School. There are six other multifamily apartment buildings, as well as 15 other duplexes and single family homes planned. This proposal is too large of a development both in density and scale as defined by the neighborhood context and like-sized buildings and uses in the area.

I am in favor of more affordable housing in Crested Butte, and I think the housing should be integrated into the towns in which the potential users will be working. Most of the Town's affordable housing needs should be accomplished within Town limits, and then secondarily accommodated in outlying areas. I think a much smaller, scaled-down version of this development could potentially work in this location, after receiving and responding to concerns and input from the public.

If elected, I will evaluate the Brush Creek proposal against the

requirements outlined in the Gunnison County LUR, to help create a development that will be both smaller in scale, and less of an impact to existing neighborhoods, the intersection with the highway and Crested Butte.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

Crested Butte has continued to move forward with affordable housing projects in the recent past with the development of infrastructure in Blocks 79 and 80. There are six single-family homes currently under construction in that area. I purchased one of those lots, and I am very familiar with what it takes to qualify and build an affordable house in town.

The Town has several pieces of land that can potentially support more affordable units, and I think they should be used for that purpose. Infrastructure should be developed in these areas, and an increase in density allowed for more local housing that integrates itself into the town's current

regulations. I think that providing affordable housing is the best way to ensure that the town maintains its sense of community and unique character, allowing locals to actually live and work in the same town. A town lived in by locals is a town that thrives with the local, friendly connection that sets us apart from other Colorado mountain towns.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

I believe the impact of short-term rentals is apparent throughout Town. The peaceful enjoyment of one's property and residence by year-round locals is challenged in every block where STRs are used.

The STR regulations recently adopted by the town went through an exhaustive public discussion and tried to address the concerns from all parties. I would like to see how these regulations play out over the next year in both the winter and summer visitor seasons. We can evaluate the

regulations, and improve upon them, or decide if something may have been unnecessary or overly burdensome, based upon public input and Town data.

**Best pet you ever had?**

I had a cat, Biscuit, who could out-fetch any dog, hands down. She was like the best combination of a cat and a dog.

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

I like to have a cold beer after a tough week at work with a friend or two.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

Of course I did. It's a healthy and good feeling to release a grump or two. They only come true if you keep them a secret.



### WILL DUJARDIN COUNCIL CANDIDATE

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

Everyone knows we need more affordable housing. The 240-unit Gatesco plan is a big opportunity and massive undertaking that can't

be rushed. We need to listen all local concerns and do our best to respect them.

I do think we need to differentiate between the NIMBY concerns and real concerns. "Why is it so big?" and "Why isn't it more focused on affordable housing?" are valid concerns that should be addressed. The plans for wells to supply water for the development might not be sufficient and the lack of a sewer plan is also concerning. Pumping sewer water back up to Crested Butte for treatment feels inefficient. However, anyone who claims there will be a "ghetto" on Brush Creek Road should look up the definition of "classism."

We need this affordable housing but we have to do it right. This project is a big chance to move forward productively, we have to come together as a community and listen to each other to make it successful.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

Town Council is addressing

the issue but it feels like they are playing catch up. Local concerns felt largely ignored for a few years as the national economy rebounded, our local houses became investments as opposed to homes while local wages did not go up. Anthracite Place has been a success so far but after speaking with employers this summer a big reason there is a labor shortage in town (there are Help Wanted posters everywhere and it's October) is the lack of affordable housing for employees.

I think the recent 5 percent STR tax to fund affordable housing is a good step. Can we incentivize homeowners to rent locally? Can we use a tax-break or reimbursement from the STR tax to compensate for lost revenue renting to long-term locals?

With the success of the recent lot lottery, have we looked at all the open space in town or possible annexes? Is matching private and public investment an option to buy houses and convert them to deed-restricted units to keep those houses in the affordable-housing pool? If I am elected this will be the most important issue to me.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

It's almost impossible to not directly or indirectly benefit from tourism in this town; the option to stay in an STR helps contribute to the tourist experience here while providing local work and business. However, I do not feel the council addressed the STR issue efficiently or in a timely manner.

As Crested Butte recovered from the recession, there were countless houses converted from local housing to second homes and STRs. The problem was evident yet two rotations of council didn't do much until recently. The 5 percent tax is a good start to help build an affordable housing fund, but why not raise that tax to even 10 percent? Out-of-town guests will be paying for it and it will increase the rate at which the affordable housing fund will grow. We can keep the \$200 fee for primary residence STRs, but why isn't the unlimited license higher, say \$1,000? Then we could split that revenue between the administrative costs

and adding to the affordable housing fund. As a member of Town Council I will look at all the options to limit STRs and encourage homeowners to rent to locals.

**Best pet you ever had?**

My dog Piper when I was young.

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

Summer = Trail/Après; Winter = Skiing/Après.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

I missed the fire this year due to a friend's wedding on the East Coast. My grump would have involved my broken femur/patella recovery, the national political climate, and improving my relationships with my family, friends, my coworkers, the athletes I coach, and this community.



### JACKSON ANTHONY PETITO COUNCIL CANDIDATE

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**

Affordable housing is the central issue our town faces. We're simply being priced out of our own town. As

a community, we need to accept that density is going to be a big part of any workable solution. That being said, this much density where there's currently open space might be too rapid, too concentrated one place. I've heard different numbers on the percentage of affordable housing in the proposed project, but none of the numbers I've heard are high enough. If we need 417 affordable units and we're building 240 units, we should be building 240 affordable units. I don't know enough about the development business to know if it's feasible, but I'd love to see proposals from developers with enough capital, and resultant financial patience, to make their money back strictly from the rental of affordable units. My understanding is that Anthracite Place is a successful example of this model. I'm hopeful that the ballot initiative in November will be a good first step toward funding 100 percent affordable developments. Designing for profit rather than the public good makes any proposal less desirable to me.

As for the process, everyone needs to know that the ultimate arbiter

of the proposal is the county Planning Commission, then the BOCC. These are public entities and, like any public entity, they operate their best with consistent public input.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

People who know more about it than I can ever hope to tell me that the chief obstacle is dedicated funding for affordable housing development. It's on the ballot in November, and we need to keep working on other sources. I'm a big fan of public/private partnerships to tackle seemingly insurmountable problems. As I said above, those work best when public concerns outweigh private profit considerations.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

Yes. Flipping a rental from long

term to short term means one less unit of housing for local residents. It's not rocket science. Conversely, in a lot of cases, STR income is keeping local families here. When I was appointed, we were close to a set of regulations I felt was pretty toothless. I'm proud of the primary residence provisions we put in after I reopened the can of worms. I was never shy about wanting tighter restrictions, especially for properties that are investments rather than homes, and I'd be open to revisiting to tighten those further. If STR income is keeping a local family in town, I don't want to mess with that. If a cap or a restriction is all that's keeping a resident in a long-term rental, I want it to remain in place.

**Best pet you ever had?**

My blind dog Brian. We brought him here at 26 lbs., on the edge of death. Big city vets said he *couldn't* possibly have the pancreatic insufficiency my wife Leah's research suggested. Dr. Laura said she'd be willing to at least test. Leah was right, Dr. Laura knew what he needed, and

within eight months we were worried about him getting *too* heavy at 44 lbs. If you rearrange the furniture, he bumps into things, but only once. I'm amazed by the map he must create in his memory. Good boy, Brian.

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

I'll briefly hit up the Barmuda Triangle for happy hour on Friday, as jobs and childcare schedules allow. It's a good way to run into people I didn't realize I wanted to see. These days you're more likely to find me there at 5:15 p.m. than 1:15 a.m. Saying that makes me feel old (wise?)

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

Many, but isn't it like a birthday candle wish? I really want those Grumps to stay burned, so mum's the word.



**KYLE "SQUIRL" RYAN**  
COUNCIL CANDIDATE

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**  
While I have not worked on the planning or design of this proposal I feel

that it is important to mention that this project is currently being designed by Andrew Hadley's Architecture office where I'm employed. Due to my limited involvement in this project, I have roughly the same information that the community does. So, with that out of the way, I feel that a project for affordable housing is needed, but feel much like the constituents who I've spoken with in that I'm wary of the scale and the details. Also, it is important to keep in mind that this parcel was purchased as a parking lot to ease congestion and parking woes that town and the mountain currently experience. While I don't want to see a 20-acre parking lot, I think that it should still be an important consideration in the design. I think that our previous leaders had some vision of their future issues that are being forsaken under this plan. In terms of process, I feel that much development moves too quickly and without enough public discussion. I know that BOZAR can be a dirty word to some folks, but I truly appreciate the extra time and consideration that they

give to the projects, neighbors, and community.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

While steps have been made to "stop the bleeding" I don't feel that enough is being done to "save the patient." The current steps being taken to make sure that deed-restricted accessory dwellings are being properly occupied are encouraging. But there are other ways to entice short term and unoccupied units to come into the long term, local, rental pool. Whether it's tax incentives to long-term rentals or subsidies to the local work force, other municipalities have tried approaches to these issues that should be explored. I feel that it is imperative that if you choose to live in this valley you should be able to thrive, regardless of how many zeros you have on the end of your net worth.

**Do short-term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

Absolutely, they impact locals both positively and negatively. While neighbors deal with the impact of visitors and noise, parking, and garbage mess that guests can bring, I also have close friends that rely on the income from STRs to continue to live here. Personally, I live in a condo that doesn't allow STRs because I want to know my neighbors. I do feel that the town should revisit the regulations to find ways to ease the burden of STRs on impacted neighbors.

**Best pet you ever had?**

I've had a few great furry companions and each one has been the "Best Pet Ever." Currently my "Best Pet Ever" is Stanley Kubrick, a Labrador-pit bull-Sharpei mix that I adopted from GVAWL almost four years ago. If anyone is looking for their next "Best Pet Ever" I encourage them to go to one of our local shelters and adopt or foster a

new furry friend today!

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

What shapes up for me after work can be any number of activities. Getting out on the trails or to a friendly bar are both par for the course. But gathering with friends and having a potluck or prepping to cover KBUT's Friday Night Fish Fry are not out of the ordinary either.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

Every year I look forward to having the Vinotok fire purge my emotional baggage. While I noticed that the Grump boxes were exceptionally full this year, I still managed to get all of mine incinerated. My most personal purge from this year was "Gypsy Hearts."



**LISA MERCK**  
COUNCIL CANDIDATE

**Let's talk housing: What do you think of the proposed Brush Creek affordable housing project—both the project itself and the process—and how would you as a councilperson or mayor try to guide the end result of that particular project?**  
The Corner at Brush Creek is a very dense project that would provide 240

rental units. It is a 14.6-acre property and they want to put about 15 to 16 units per acre, which seems reasonable. There are other projects in the valley that have over 40 to 55 units per acre. Our current gap in the valley according to the 2016 housing needs assessment is 420 units. Affordable housing is definitely needed in our community and county. Our work force, teachers, construction workers, police officers, nurses, restaurant employees, etc need options for affordable livable rentals as well as ownership opportunity. The public meeting this week will be good feedback to see how the community feels on both sides. As a council member I would need to look at all aspects of the project such as transportation, traffic flow, the environment, school district growth, sewage, application process for renters, parking, and how the project will impact the current residents. This is a big decision that could have both positive and negative consequences. I would need to see what the constituents as a whole want. I believe in the long run it would be positive for the community and county.

It would be nice to disburse other large housing projects in the future to other areas in the valley. It is a rare opportunity to get a private investor to put up funds for this type of project so I think we need to look at moving forward, stay involved, informed, and educated.

**In general, is the town addressing the affordable housing issue? As a member of Town Council, what would you suggest the town do differently to address the issue?**

The town is trying their best to address the affordable housing issues and have been working with many other entities. There is no easy answer and more needs to be done over time. I believe some of the land that is owned by the town could be used for different projects such as more rentals and ownership opportunity. The housing crisis needs to be solved for the good of the community and county. Affordable housing is a necessity. Development in small towns with dense populations can be constrained and restricted in many aspects due to money,

space, parking, usage, recreation, ranching, traffic and the competition of land for other uses such as town snow storage, etc. We just need to continue working with all entities in the valley.

**Do short term rentals (STRs) impact locals in Crested Butte? Do you think the council should revisit the STR regulations? If so, in what way?**

Yes, STRs affect us all (locals, second home owners and visitors) both good and bad. There are so many different variables to consider in this situation—property rights, locals, property managers, local businesses, hotels, B&Bs, visitors, second home owners etc. Each person has their own stake in the matter. It is hard to come to a be all end all solution for everyone. Some need STRs to help pay mortgages and bills. STRs squeezes out cheap rentals and therefore rents are increased and harder to pay. I do not believe the STR needs to be revisited for at least another year or two. The current council gave us a good starting point. After a couple years

I would like to reassess the cause and effect the new guidelines, regulations, and restrictions have made and how they have actually impacted the community as a whole.

**Best pet you ever had?**

None. That way I can come and go as I please.

**It is 5:15 in the afternoon on a typical Friday (summer or winter): Are you likely to be found in a wine bar / a dive bar / on a trail / in the library / in front of the TV / at work / in a dispensary / in a coffee shop / in a yoga class / all of the above or none of the above?**

I could be found mountain biking, running or spinning, working at Sopris Women's Clinic catching up on patient charts, or at happy hour for a cocktail.

**Did you put a grump in the Vinotok fire? Care to share?**

No grumps. I'm a positive upbeat person. Happy with life, family, and friends!

Don't forget the *Crested Butte News* Candidate's Forum will be held Sunday, October 22 at the CB Center for the Arts. *The public is encouraged to attend and ask questions.*

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