



Mark O'Neill

Born, raised and educated in Southern California where he soon began community work as a Parks & Recreation Specialist and Center Director; later as

- Athletic Council President
- High School Football & Baseball Coach for 20+ years.
- High School & College Sports Official and Assignor.
- Administrative Asst., Athletic Director, Counselor & Camp Director at a private school.
- He has led student trips to Japan England, Italy, France & Mexico
- Owner of 2 successful businesses where he has trained & supervised as many 100 employees.
- O'Neill moved to Las Cruces **2006** and over his 17 years here, served on 8 city or community boards, has continued his Freelance Writing, taught hobby and workforce classes for the DACC & Chaired a local Labor Board. He has fallen in love with this City and now wants to lend a steady hand to serve it's citizens as a **City Councilor.**

MARK O'NEILL

Candidate for:

City Council

District 1

- Experience
- Innovative Leadership
- Creative Solutions

Ready to Listen & Work for YOU!

Why am I a running? *partial list*

1. To assist in providing our citizens with the **best possible Quality of Life.**
2. To assist in making Las Cruces a safer place, where business, the economy and it's people can thrive.
3. To make criminals more accountable & be sure victims have better advocacy and restitution.
4. To insure that community members who need help, get help; especially our Vets, homeless & Gen Z(13-26) where addiction and suicide is prevalent; and keep our seniors aware of internet & e-mail scams.
5. To promote better street safety by
a) better engineering of lights on major thorough-fares. b) by mitigating obstructions which block the view of cross traffic or stop signs. C) by more frequent painting of lane lines, crosswalks, speed bumps and stop lines .
6. To finally expand Telshor two lanes from Wells Fargo to Sam's Club; Long overdue.

Please "X" Mark

O'Neill

On your ballot

Mark O'Neill,

A candidate for the open seat on the City Council to represent **District #1** which encompasses Downtown, Meerscheidt complex, Solano, Elks area, Apodaca Park & Mesquite areas

O'Neill's 18 years as a resident, serving on important city boards, and his regular attendance at City Council meetings keeps him up to date on the issues which affect area citizens.

He has often been elected to leadership roles on these committees.

O'Neill's background as a **business owner**, in education, athletics, parks & recreation has helped him keep his **finger on the pulse** of the communities in which he's served.

He offers a **lifetime of community service** in Cities, Counties, School Districts, and was employed in Las Cruces in Federal Government Positions including the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and the U.S. Census Bureau.

O'Neill will offer **CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX PROBLEMS...**

***Please VOTE:
Nov. 7th !***

Clear Vision..

A. To Improve the Quality of Life for all Las Cruces & build upon our unique historic, art , music and film culture.

B. Provide Experienced Leadership in Policy, Strategic Planning & Fiscal Management.

C. To Keep Citizens SAFE !

D. To make it easier for businesses to survive and thrive in Las Cruces.

E. To create more options to help with Mental Health issues in our community.

Community Service and Affiliations:

- ◆ CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
4 Years (2018-2023) Vice Chair
- ◆ PARK & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
8 Years (2010-2018) Chair
- ◆ LABOR MANAGEMENT RELATIONS BOARD D.A.C
5 Years (2016-2021) Chair
- ◆ J.Paul Taylor Governance Board
- ◆ Elevate Las Cruces
- ◆ LC Resiliency Committee
- ◆ Film Las Cruces
- ◆ Coalition Against Bullying CAB
- ◆ Suicide Task Force LC/LCPS
- ◆ Opioid Crisis Group
- ◆ Moose Lodge

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~~dmoore@lascruces.org~~

GREATER LAS CRUCES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ELECTION 2023

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LAS CRUCES MAYORAL & COUNCIL
CANDIDATES**

To inform our membership & business community, we invite you to complete this questionnaire below. Your completed questionnaire, along with your resume, will be emailed to our list serve, along with posting on our website (lascruces.org). *Please submit this completed questionnaire & photo to dmoore@lascruces.org no later than Friday, October 20th.*

DISCLAIMER: The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce does not endorse candidates, but provides our members materials & resources to make informed decisions. Additionally, we provide general election information on the municipal elections & encourage voter participation.

CANDIDATE NAME (as it appears on ballot): Mark J. O'Neill

PHONE: 575) 571-1324 _____ EMAIL: coachoneill@msn.com _____

Please circle or highlight the position of which you are a qualified

candidate: Mayor Councilor District 1 Councilor District 2



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1. Please identify the leadership qualities & experiences you will bring to this position.

A- A lifetime of public service and leadership roles with cities, public and private schools, Counties and with the federal Government including 17 years here in Las Cruces with appointments to the following City/County Boards and Committees. 8 years on the parks & Recreation Advisory Board (4 as Chair); 4 years on the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee, 5 years as Chairman of the DAC Labor Management & Relations Board and currently on the J. Paul Taylor Governance Board. I also was a business owner of two successful businesses.

Other affiliations here have included Elevate Las Cruces, Film Las Cruces, Suicide Prevention Task Force, Coalition Against Bullying (CAB) : Moose Lodge: IHOM Catholic Church.

2. Ensuring all voices are heard & considered can be daunting, what is your plan to actively engage citizens & businesses in the decision-making process for city policies & projects, while maintaining civility and decorum between all interested parties?

A- I will listen to residents and business owner's concerns, research the issues, be transparent and responsive. I have been known to bring people together, ease tensions and get things done. I wish to continue to move our community forward with sensible leadership and innovative solutions. Town Halls are useful to address important issues and work sessions are key to set a path to resolve them. Sometimes if it requires a large amount of funding or is a controversial topic, put it on the ballot like we do with Bonds.

If it is an issue or topic specific to a certain District, that council member should hold a District meeting with the mayor in attendance to gather more input. Maybe a Power Point presentation is needed.

If the City is planning any infrastructure work which will impact a business in any way they they must provide adequate notice and meet with the business owner on how they can mitigate problems.

7. Economic & business development, along with talent/workforce preparation, in Las Cruces is key to our continued growth & sustainability. Please give us your definition of “business friendly” & describe your economic development plan, including entrepreneurship.

A- I want entrepreneurs to be able to find suitable locations available for their businesses, and get support from the city business & workforce office on everything from start ups, data, internships, funding & employee sources.

Business friendly means help is available, and the process will be smooth and done in a timely fashion, *providing both sides cooperate*. This includes the process of starting and sustaining a business, inspections, additions, conversions, re-zoning other actions the owners need to survive and thrive.

My plan is to 1) Improve on the city's aesthetics, infrastructure, crime statistics and reduce blight; emphasize our weather, beautiful mountains, wonderful people and low cost of living to draw new businesses to our City, including large corporations. Let us invigorate our economy in order to keep our University graduates living and working in the area.

We must also develop a larger and better trained workforce not forgetting our younger workers such as Generation Z (ages 14-26) and Senior Citizens who want to remain active who can fill much needed part time jobs such as Movie Extras, Umpires, Lifeguards, Sport's officials, Servers, Call Center employees, Day-Care workers, Poker Dealers, A priority must also be to expand tourism to our area with major media blitzes. There is a lot of history here, a lot of sites to see as well as our art, culture, theatre, film & Space industry.

4. **Addressing homelessness is a complex issue. What strategies do you propose to provide support and resources for individuals experiencing homelessness while also addressing the concerns of residents and business owners?**

A- Most Homeless would rather not be homeless and most homeless are not criminals.

They need place like a Camp Hope, but larger (capacity is only 50) as a starting point to begin transitioning to integrate back into society. They will be provided food, medical, restrooms, shower facilities and laundry access.

My plan, for those unhoused who want to improve their situation and get clean at the city's expense (if an addict or alcoholic) can join a monitored "Step up" program where they can earn other privileges after treatment, counseling & rehab such as a beautification job around the city or at Camp Hope, an upgrade on clothes, housing with a bed, refrigerator and more private facilities. It would be drug and alcohol free environment and they would have to agree and prove themselves responsible in following curfews, tenant rules & guidelines and could not have guests unless they were also in the program.

Those entering this "Step up" program would be vetted for a criminal background if this was the case they would be last in line for housing. If there was victim to the crime and they were provided a job, they would have to pay 1/2 their earnings in restitution to the victim before being provided housing.

In all such camps and public housing there must be security, cameras and safety patrols to for the protection of the tenants and nearby businesses and residents.

5. Ensuring the safety of our residents and businesses is paramount. What strategies do you propose to address and reduce crime in Las Cruces, while also building trust between law enforcement and the community?

A- Be sure we have a full compliment of public Safety officers. Good vetting of new applicants; decent pay (\$20-\$25 hr, is too low) and conditions to retain good officers, improve training especially in the area of Use of Force and De-escalation. We must continue to have transparency by city officials and the LCPD as presently happening. This City is spread out so we need some more sub-stations in addition to the Headquarters downtown and sub station in Sonoma Ranch. Criminals must be held accountable just as our police dept. should be. Repeat offenders cannot be allowed to skirt bail, be released to commit more crimes, often to the same victims. Where property damage is involved we must lower the \$1,000 thresh-hold (at least by half) in order to charge and arrest the perpetrator. We must provide better advocacy and restitution for victims using a system whereby a perpetrator is required bear some of that cost.

***We need more frequent patrols overnight but not to the point where our officers are forced into overtime. I recommend using Code Enforcement officers to patrol high crime areas, strip-malls, construction sites overnight for surveillance and when necessary contact dispatch to send a police unit. Just the presence of the code enforcement vehicles should help reduce incidents of crime.**

In order to build trust with officers, the City Leaders and citizens we should NOT have an all citizen oversight Board. This has been tried in other cities and has proven mostly ineffective. Dictating to professionals about how to do their job is a non-starter. It has also been suggested that citizens might also get involved with details of specific cases and of course they could not on pending litigation. The LCPD has an independent review board (OIR) which scrutinizes complaints and responses quarterly; it also has an internal task force and does Internal investigations.

I do however recommend the following if the City Manager and City Council decide it is needed... A co-operative Board or committee which works with the LCPD to gather information as to what are the currently policies and training methods etc and offer ideas to improve policing in general. In my opinion it would involve the Police Chief and Academy Instructor; The Mayor and one other councilor: Someone from the court system; The D.A.; and two members of the community preferably with some knowledge in these areas.

Tis group would meet quarterly and bring in outside experts if needed.

5. Affordable housing is a concern for many residents and businesses. What steps do you plan to take to promote and facilitate the development of income-aligned housing in Las Cruces through your role on the Las Cruces City Council?

A- Elevate Las Cruces was a step in the right direction in the City's future planning.

We must identify good locations for low-income and medium income housing and collaborate with developers in order to get the projects started, Both have to know the expectations of the other. Often time special conditions or incentives might be needed such as re-zoning, tax breaks, variances, or other city provisions which could include general street, parking or neighborhood improvements or infrastructure.

Also we need to low income rental communities for millennials and Seniors as are being built in California and Arizona and other places.

Optional “just for fun” questions

If you could have any superpower for a day, what would it be and how would you use it to benefit the residents of Las Cruces?

Safety Power:

Repair all streets which need it, fill all potholes, mitigate obstructions limiting sight of cross traffic & stop signs,; better engineer signals at major thoroughfares; reline all lane lines, stop lines, speed bump markings, arrows, crosswalks. Let's keep people SAFE on the roads.

Eliminate all Fentanyl, opioids, including Heroin from Las Cruces

If you had the chance to invite any historical figure, living or dead, to dinner in

Las Cruces, who would it be and why? What would you talk about and where would you take them in our city?

A- Sir Isaac Newton, because of his vast wisdom in the areas of language, Science (gravity, space, planets, motion, light, cooling) mathematics, & more. To show him and talk to him about what became of his ideas and knowledge. I would take him to relevant areas at NMSU also to all our museums and our Spaceport and to La Posta for Dinner& train a parrot to welcome him

- **If you could choose a theme song to represent your vision for Las Cruces, what song would it be and why?**

**A- "Like A Diamond" by Tom Petty; with she or her referring to Las Cruces
Some lyrics,,, "She goes on Forever, she's going to shine forever Like a
Diamond in the Sunlight.**