

1.) Who would you appoint as Police Chief when you are mayor?

Naming a Chief of Police will be a top priority in my administration. However, a potential Chief, will need to be chosen based on a set of qualifications that would most suit the job of leading the largest police department in the state in order to lower crime and work with the citizens of Jackson. The City of Jackson needs and deserves a full-time police chief. It appears that one of the major benefits of the recent arrangement was a closer working relationship between the JPD and the Hinds County Sheriff's Department. However, there was no formal agreement outlining the details of this relationship. I propose that the City of Jackson and Hinds County enter into a formal agreement outlining a working relationship between the JPD and the Hinds County Sheriff's Department. This formal agreement would indicate the level of authority that will be exercised by each department and who would be in charge of various functions of law enforcement within Hinds County and the City of Jackson. By working out this agreement the matter of the police chief versus the sheriff would be settled and formalized. And one of the products of the agreement would be a full-time police chief for the city of Jackson.

2.) What qualifications will you look for in your Police Chief?

Among the qualifications I will look for in a chief is a proven record of community-oriented policing that can produce dramatic results in lowering crime. We need to ensure that we have a person who has experience building relationships and working effectively with multiple law enforcement agencies, given that we are the capital city. We need a chief who has the experience and know how to work with a diverse population with varying needs. We also need a police chief who respects his or her officers and can motivate them, and who effectively manages resources.

3.) Does Jackson need more police officers?

My view is that Jackson must have at least 500 police officers on the streets to most effectively patrol the city and fight crime. Under my administration we put more than 500 police officers on the streets for the first time in the city's history. At the same time, the homicide rate was cut by 40%, and crime was reduced to its lowest point in more than 20 years while I was in office.

4.) JPD has traditionally had a very top heavy management structure with lots of deputy command staff and support staff. Would you as mayor reduce this command staff? And if you did, what would you do with the savings?

I would work with my chief and based on his or her recommendations, go from there. If there are savings realized from some cuts, better equipment and more police officers are certainly two ways we could use funds.

- 5.) **How has JPD dealt with the Fuelman situation correctly? And if no, how would you have handled the situation?**

I understand that an internal investigation was conducted, and the specific results of that investigation have not been made public. In my administration I plan to utilize a nationally recognized system of accountability to oversee the operations of all City departments, including police.

- 6.) **Research shows that JPD has one of the highest percentages of civilians vs. law enforcement personnel in the country (39.4% civilians versus the southeastern average of 20.5%). If these civilians were reduced significantly, more officers could be hired and salaries increased WITHOUT additional funding. Would you reduce the civilian employment as Mayor so you could hire more police officers and give them better pay?**

We need to take a look at all departments and make sure we have the necessary people performing the duties that optimize the service for the citizens of Jackson. If there is evidence of duplication or areas that should be reorganized or cut in any department, I would expect we would do that. I am committed to an active and aggressive recruitment program that will yield a police force of 500 or more officers.

Additionally, however I am also committed to putting in place a career development system that will allow officers to obtain rank and more responsibility as they progress in their careers in a systematic way. This includes having regular promotional exams. The last promotional exam for police officers was during my administration.

- 7.) **JPD leadership disbanded the Gun Interdiction Team (GIT) last spring and we've seen our murder rate skyrocket this past year. This multi-jurisdictional team was responsible for taking over 200 felons of the street over an 18 month period. The key to the GIT's success was the ability to enforce laws with prosecution through the federal system and avoiding the overcrowded Hinds County Circuit Court Docket. Would you bring the GIT back? When?**

I most definitely would bring back the Gun Interdiction Team as quickly as possible. It worked very effectively under my administration, and we continually took guns off the street and worked extremely well with other agencies. We also instituted Operation Ceasefire cooperatively with the U.S. Attorney's Office to make certain that felons found with weapons were tried and convicted.

- 8.) **JPS has a significant crisis called school dropouts. At present, in excess of 50% of the male population in JPS drops out before graduating high school (some estimates have placed this figure near 70%). This is a major crisis and stats show this leads to tremendous**

negative impact on the entire community – not least of which is creating more volume for the criminal justice system. What exactly would you do as mayor about school dropouts?

As mayor, I pledge to work very closely with the Jackson Public School district to drastically curb the dropout rate. One of the ways that we can do this is to get more involved in the school district to develop after school programs, in-school intervention programs and other ways to reach out to our young people before it is too late. I would initiate a process to promote the design and implementation of a plan to encourage students to stay in school and to obtain their high school education. One source of the problem is the free time that young people have between the time when school is let out and when parents get off from work to supervise them. During the summer months, the City of Jackson under my administration worked out an arrangement with the Jackson Public Schools where up to nine schools were used for summer camp. I would propose a similar arrangement to open up schools for after school programs throughout the community where students could come for recreation and tutorial activities. This would keep them active and in a positive environment after school, providing academic support.

9.) Safety around public and private schools in Jackson is critical. Do you have any plans for enhancing safety in and around our schools?

During my last administration, we found School Resource Officers to be an effective means of providing safety and anti-drugs education in public schools. This program needs to be reinstated, and expanded where possible. Additionally, I personally visited every public school in the City and secured pledges from students to refrain from gun violence. I plan to continue that effort.

10.) After school programs like the 5,000 kids who participate at area Boys & Girls Clubs are critical to keeping kids safe and off the streets after school and during the summer. With the down economy, a number of these clubs must close. Should you as mayor support such programs? If so what would you do as mayor to support this or similar programs? Do you have any ideas on how to create involvement across the community to support and fund these programs?

I certainly support programs like the Boys & Girls Clubs and mentor at Rowan Middle School myself through my affiliation with the 100 Black Men of Jackson. As mayor, I have championed and would continue to champion these community service organizations, and recognize the tremendous need to provide programs that enrich the lives of our youth. One of the things we did while I was in office was to offer community service grants to organizations that provided essential services to our youth, some of which were after-school programs. Tens of thousands of dollars were granted to organizations each year with funds that we received from the federal government. I would target youth development programs with federal funds.

- 11.) **The mayor has responsibility for the Municipal Court. Safecity research has shown that we have millions in unpaid fines and tens of thousands of outstanding warrants. What would you do to make fines count and cleanup the warrants?**

During my administration, we increased the number of municipal court judges to five through legislative action by state lawmakers. Now we need to make unpaid fines and outstanding warrants a priority. We implemented amnesty days during my administration to encourage people to come down and pay outstanding fines without the threat of having to go before a judge for it being late or facing a warrant. This was very effective and we were able to take in tremendous amounts of money in outstanding fines and warrants. One of our challenges is prioritizing our law enforcement to be able to deal with the most serious crime with the resources that we have now. We need to increase our police force and we need to dedicate personnel and time to collect outstanding fines.

- 12.) **Many police departments and mayors across the country have recognized the connection between crime and cleaning up the “broken windows” – the best example was New York City where a focus on small crime, disorder and “broken windows” reduced major crime in the 1990’s by over 70%. Are you familiar with this theory? And what would you do to fix the vacant/abandoned homes, trash strewn lots, and other broken windows in Jackson?**

I am very familiar with this theory, and we deployed JPD officers to Boston to learn about it first hand. Their knowledge was used to establish a special community policing effort and to support the weed and seed program in Washington Addition. Our experience with the broken window theory, taught us that Police Officers should be known to residents in neighborhoods and should be approachable to address concerns at the outset. Additionally, keeping our city clean would be a major plus to making the city more attractive, as well as serving to deter crime. That’s why when I was Mayor we initiated curbside pick up of yard debris and roll off dumpster days where residents could bring their household goods and debris to be picked up at a specified site each month. During my administration we also established the Household Hazardous Waste Center at Battlefield Park where residents can dispose of hazardous waste that cannot be placed at the curbside. This method of disposal keeps hazardous waste out of our landfills, and ultimately, out of our sources of drinking water

We also initiated a concept called the Jackson Clean Team where city workers would volunteer twice a year to help clean up neighborhoods and where residents could join a team effort to clean up their neighborhoods with equipment being provided by the city.

However, we need to do more and if elected Mayor I will place in the Community Improvement Division staff that will work exclusively with neighborhoods not only on clean

up campaigns but to address nuisances that local residents have identified. By doing this we would be assured that those concerns that are top priority in the neighborhoods are being addressed within the Community Improvement Division whether they are abandoned houses, abandoned cars, dump sites or any other nuisance in the neighborhood that would take away from its attractiveness.

13.) Abandoned housing is a major problem in Jackson with over 12,000 vacant and abandoned structures. What would you do specifically to tackle the problem?

We were aggressive in dealing with abandoned housing under my administration. We tore down some 2,000 housing units in the eight years I was in office. However, in addition to demolition, I think it is important to partner with private developers to utilize publicly-owned, vacant property for residential housing development. We will continue to address vacant lots and properties aggressively while bringing the potential for development and revenue to the city's coffers.

14.) Hinds County Circuit Court has significant backlogs of cases. Safecity research has shown that HCCC has taken over 750 days to prosecute property crimes and 900 days to prosecute murder cases. A major reason is the lack of cohesion between JPD/HCSO and the DA's office. What would you and your police chief do differently to cooperate with the DA's office to focus on prosecution?

One of the things that I did as Mayor was to work out an agreement with the District Attorney's Office to have a Police Detective in the DA's office serve as a liaison between the DA and the Police Department to coordinate case files and other vital information so that cases could be prosecuted, evidence could be shared in a timely manner and other important cooperation between the two branches could occur to deal with the backlog of cases. The city also funded an assistant DA to help expedite prosecution. Additionally the City helped to fund a position in HCSO to help track the disposition of inmates in the Hinds County criminal justice system. I would hope to work out these agreements again.

15.) Over 750 days to prosecute property crimes...this is an unbelievable statistic and really goes to the core of Jackson's crime problems – Jackson has historically done very little about “small crimes” that are destroying the quality of life – do you agree? And what would you do to fight this crime that preys on our seniors, neighborhoods and businesses?

Clearly we have to do more to address property crimes that have plagued our residents all over the city of Jackson. One way we can do this is to put more officers on the streets. We must also work with our neighborhood associations to open the lines of communication, to

share crime statistics and to organize neighborhood watches. We have to start dealing with property crimes at a grass roots level.

16.)Detention Center overcrowding is a major recurring problem for Jackson and Hinds County. Hinds County actually has about half the beds per thousand as Madison County. Would you support increasing the size of the detention center? Will you make this a priority?

The incarceration of prisoners is the responsibility of the County. I would be open to discussing this problem with the Hinds County Supervisors and Sheriff to see what the best course of action needs to be. I would hope we could find the opportunity to address it.

17.)In your opinion, do we need more police, more detention or jail beds, or more judges to keep repeat offenders from committing crimes?

One of the things we need to do is reinstate the gun interdiction unit as I mentioned above. Many of the repeat offenders are caught with guns and could be most effectively prosecuted by the US Attorney's office.

We must make certain that repeat offenders are fully prosecuted. This goes to JPD's ability to work with other agencies, specifically the DA's office in certain cases, to make sure that proper evidence is secured and presented in support of prosecution.

18.)Within law enforcement, multi-jurisdictional task forces have proven to be extremely effective and efficient. Jackson is at the heart of a much larger and diverse metropolitan area that extends far beyond the city limits. The Metro One helicopter has been a successful program that has bridged gaps across departmental lines and encouraged communications and cooperation throughout many departments in the metro area. Do you support collaboration and cooperation in metro area law enforcement?

Cooperation between all law enforcement agencies at every level – county, state, federal, and our neighbors – is important in addressing crime in Metro Jackson. We worked under my administration with all levels of law enforcement to improve communications and developed task forces to combat drug and gun crimes. We can do a better job. I believe that federal resources earmarked to combat crime in metropolitan areas will be available in the near future. I anticipate using those resources to help address the mounting need for agencies to share information, to communicate to one another more effectively and to gain state-of-the-art technology that will allow us to fight crime in all of our communities