

# Consolidated List of Mayor/Town Council Candidate Bios

## CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR

### **Ken Riley**

Soda Spring

I am retired from the Air Force and the aerospace industry. My wife Linda and I purchased a condo in Keystone in 1998 and I became a resident and registered voter in 2021. In 2010, I became actively involved in the Keystone Community and in 2020, became one of the leaders of the incorporation initiative. I served on the Incorporation Committee, the Charter Commission and am a leader of the Incorporation Transition Team as we prepare to make Keystone Colorado's newest town.

I am passionate about finding solutions to US6 pedestrian and vehicle safety, the lack of coherent and maintained trails and open space, growth which has been approved without mitigating the impacts to pedestrian safety, traffic and parking, the lack of childcare for our residents and workforce, and lack of housing for our seasonal and full-time workforce. Incorporation gives us the opportunity to address these issues and implement solutions to meet the needs of the entire community—the full-time residents, year-round and seasonal workforce, businesses and second homeowners.

This first Town Council can make a model town focused on service to the entire community, lean and efficient operations, transparency in all we do, and getting community involvement and input to find solutions to current issues and chart the path for the community's future. I pledge to work with my fellow council members to achieve these goals.

As your Mayor, I will work tirelessly for our community, listen to your concerns and needs, and work to find solutions to the issues you face now and in the future. It won't be easy, but by working together and with the help of the entire Keystone Community, we can address our current issues and chart a course to make Keystone a world class place to live, work, visit and play.

## CANDIDATES FOR TOWN COUNCIL

### **Nick Bjugan**

Loveland Pass Village

Hello Keystone! I'm excited about this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to help build a town from the ground up. I grew up in a small town in Minnesota and have been a full-time resident of Summit County for over 12 years. I started my journey in Sunrise/Tenderfoot employee housing while working at Keystone Resort. Subsequently, I've resided in Montezuma, Dillon Valley, Silverthorne, and now back in Keystone with my girlfriend and dog Loki.

As an employee of the Town of Silverthorne for over 7 years in building maintenance and I.T., I've been involved with the inner workings of a local municipality. I also serve on the Silverthorne Art Selection Committee, which helps find locations and artists for public art within the town. Additionally, I run a small handyman business throughout the county, which has allowed me to get to know many of our neighbors.

Besides work, I enjoy as many hobbies as possible that our beautiful region provides. In the winter, I love snowboarding/skiing at our local resorts (and beyond, depending on the snow!), snowmobiling, and earning my turns in the backcountry. I love mountain biking, rafting, fishing, dirt biking, and hiking in the summer. Year-round you can find me at our local music venues.

As a member of our Town Council, I'll work to provide what is best for the community while refraining from unnecessary taxation and spending. I also value a strong collaborative relationship with our home resort.

Having personally experienced the challenges of making ends meet in Summit County, I aim to bring a unique and fresh perspective to the council. I have many ideas, but I mostly want to be a voice for the community. Your support is greatly appreciated, and I look forward to representing our community.

## **Sarah Keel**

Snowdance Condos

Owner, Keystoner Mountain Coffee & Bakery

Sarah Keel was born and raised in Connecticut. She graduated with High Honors from Marlboro College in Vermont with a Bachelor's degree in Psychology with a concentration in Middle Eastern Studies. Sarah also holds an MBA from the Graziadio School of Business Management at Pepperdine University.

During her time in Colorado, she lived in Telluride and Vail before moving to Keystone. Sarah met her husband, Cyrus Keel, in Dillon and they welcomed a son, Cashius, in 2019. Sarah and Cyrus are the owners of Keystoner Mountain Coffee and Gluten-Free Bakery in Keystone. They have chosen to raise their family here in Keystone and would like to see the town develop into a true family-friendly resort.

Sarah served on the Keystone Charter Commission and has volunteered for the incorporation efforts for the past few years. She would like to continue to serve the Keystone community by representing residents on our first Town Council. This is a pivotal moment in our Town's history and Sarah wants to ensure that we are setting the right foundation for a long-term successful town that is representative and serves our unique populations and needs. She would like to see a balanced town vision that encourages an enjoyable, affordable, livable community for our residents, while also appealing to our visitors. Sarah believes that this balance will be crucial for Keystone's success.

As a business owner, full time resident, wife and mother in Keystone, Sarah is committed and excited to see the future of Keystone represented and built by its citizens.

## **Dan Sullivan**

Alders

Greetings, Keystone! I'm Dan Sullivan, and I'm excited to announce my candidacy for Keystone Town Council. As a recent retiree residing in the Alders with my wife Carol, I am eager to contribute to the next phase of our town's development.

In my professional journey, I've been a partner in respected accounting and organizational management consulting firms, bringing a wealth of experience in finance, strategy and organizational management. Now in retirement, I am passionate about leveraging this experience to ensure Keystone's next pivotal years are built on a solid foundation.

I've had the honor of serving as the Vice Chair of both the Election Commission and the Charter Commission, demonstrating my commitment to fair governance and community involvement. These experiences have equipped me with a nuanced understanding of our town's inner workings. I believe that the next few years are pivotal for Keystone and I am eager to play a role in ensuring that our town's foundation remains solid and poised for appropriate growth.

In addition to my roles in commissions, I possess extensive experience in complex negotiations, a skill set crucial for navigating the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for Keystone. I am a firm believer in the power of community engagement. The collective wisdom of our residents is an invaluable resource and I am dedicated to ensuring that the decisions we make reflect the needs and aspirations of the people of Keystone. Together, we can navigate the challenges and celebrate the successes that our future will present.

As we embark on this journey together, I invite you to join me in building a Keystone that we are all proud to call home. Together, let's take the next big step for our town's future!

## **Carol Kerr**

Soda Ridge

Army veteran, communication professional and mom

I've lived all over this country and the world, but Keystone is the first residence my husband and I were able to choose for ourselves. I first fell in love with Keystone while stationed at Fort Carson in the '80s. Since then, Keystone vacations were treats for us and our three kids – and will be for our two granddaughters. To contribute to my new community, I volunteered for the Keystone election and communication committees. Energized by that work, I now ask for your vote for the first Town leadership team. Down-to-earth, with fresh perspective and no agenda, I will listen intently and work hard for Keystone.

I was initially wary of new government, so I did a deep dive on the Incorporation feasibility, Charter work sessions, and neighboring government decisions. I've listened to my Keystone neighbors at town halls, in the media, and when knocking on doors. There's no doubt: local decisions for local concerns will be powerful *if* they are for and about *our* community. We know that changes are on the horizon – traffic, residential mix, ski industry, climate change and water use, etc. That's why this is the time to be intentional in analyzing, planning, and creating frameworks to shape how we respond and preserve what we most value. I think our priorities are clear –

- Retain Keystone's unique character,
- Improve family and workforce safety,
- Enhance access to nature,
- Prioritize lean, efficient government,
- Create a government that responds to our diverse community.

I recently retired after 30 years of service as an Army officer, active and Reserve, overlapping more than 20 years on faculty/staff at the U.S. Army War College. I believe my background in leadership, analysis, and planning will serve the Town of Keystone.

Talk with me on Facebook: Carol Kerr for Keystone

## **Jon Hagenow**

Sunrise Employee Housing

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the candidates looking to represent you. For those who may not know me I am an outdoor enthusiast who currently works within the hospitality industry; having worked at various properties in Summit County over the last several years. Previously I worked in management consulting for Accenture where I was involved with supporting and advising some of our nation's largest healthcare providers, vaccine manufacturers and credit unions. This has advanced my problem solving and consensus building skills which I think will be critical as our town officially incorporates. Before following my dream of moving to the mountains I was born, raised, and attended school on the East Coast. Being raised by a single mother I understand intimately the challenges families face while trying to thrive, which is exaggerated in today's economic climate. Throughout my life I have always felt supported by and involved in my community. In the past I have given back through service on volunteer boards including the regional and national boards for the Boy Scouts of America, an organization which was arguably one of the most influential in my life and one which I was heavily involved in. During my time on these boards my proudest accomplishment was supporting membership policy changes and increased access to the program for LGBTQ people and young women. I am hoping to continue giving back, through servant leadership, to my community as part of the town council. I am very interested in continuing to learn more about my neighbors and what we face as key issues for our town. It is my goal to be a leader and consensus builder as I hope to be part of the pivotal transitional time for our home - Keystone.

## **Valerie Thisted**

North Fork

Please refer to my Charter Commission Bio for a more detailed professional and personal background.

I am a Colorado native who grew up in a similar, nearby mountain community, so I've seen the impact of unchecked change and growth on the place I once loved and grew-up in. My husband and I have owned in Keystone for 16 years and lived here for six. Keystone is home, and we have three kids who attend elementary and high school in the Summit School District.

The job of establishing The Town of Keystone isn't finished. It's true that Keystone is a community that is anchored by the business of a resort and tourism, but we are more than a Resort. Our community has an historic opportunity to gain autonomy, build on what has worked, and avoid what hasn't. There is a huge learning curve, and we need continuity between the Charter and the Town Ordinances. We are tailoring something from the ground up, and to a large extent, learning as we go. I am very passionate about The Town of Keystone, and I have been supporting the effort and working behind the scenes in every way possible. Most recently, I served on the Charter Commission.

Anyone who truly knows me, knows I'm passionate, loyal, committed, kind, and a bit fiery when necessary. Although I am a team player, I'm not a follower. I'm not afraid to pause for poise, question a situation, and swim upstream. I'm NOT an aspiring politician. I'm sticking my neck out because I'm committed and convinced Incorporation is the right thing to do, and it has to be done well and with good intentions. It's unequivocally impossible to make everyone happy, but I can promise I will remain authentic and transparent. I welcome spirited, respectful discourse on any issue. I thrive on leaning into other perspectives, and finding solutions.

## **Gretchen Davis**

The Pines

I am a retired physics/mathematics teacher and certified Principal.

My husband and I have owned property in Keystone for many years and have lived full-time in Keystone for the last ten years. Community service is important to me. Prior to moving to Keystone, I served on non-profit Boards at the community, state, regional & national levels. As the recipient of a number of volunteer awards over the years, I am proud to have been named "Outstanding Volunteer for the state of Missouri.

Upon moving to Keystone, I moved my volunteer service here. Currently I serve on the KOA and KCL Boards, and am President of the Pines HOA.

Keystone incorporation is a particular passion of mine. Serving on the Keystone Incorporation Committee, I was actively involved in the Election Commission and in writing the Town Charter.

Many years of ownership in Keystone offer me a unique perspective regarding the issues of owners who rent, second homeowners and permanent residents. I have spent time in each role and bring those perspectives with me as decisions are made for our new town.

Over my years in Keystone, I have watched the growth and changes in our community. It concerns me that there has been little planning around issues related to traffic, pedestrian safety, and the trail system. I believe my experience qualifies me to help to determine the needs of our town, and to plan to solve the problems created by unmanaged growth. If elected, I commit listen to all Keystone citizens to ensure their issues are considered by the Town Council. I look forward to helping to set our new town on course to meet its full potential.

I have the time, interest and experience to support our new town as it forms.

## **Aaron J Parmet**

Sonne/Loveland Pass Village

I LOVE Keystone. I learned to ski here. I moved here 21 years ago. Skis, bikes, and community service are my passions. Keystone is unique among local communities: a resort that also grew into a town.

### **My Keystone vision:**

- Peaceful, safe, and true to our mountain environment
  - I believe in traffic/pedestrian safety and low noise/light pollution
- Livable, walkable, bikeable, bus-able, drive-able, park-able
  - Locals need places to live, and need to be able to get around town
- Prosperous Responsibility
  - We can outcompete our neighbors without losing our soul, without taxing residents, and without irresponsible spending

### **I believe representing you as a town councilor means inclusive leadership.**

I have the experience:

- 7 years on the board of directors of a nonprofit
- Served both federal and local government agencies

Current roles:

- Nurse Manager at our local hospital
- Lead Avalanche Faculty at Colorado Mountain College
- Team Leader with Summit County Rescue Group
- VP – Sonne HOA Board

Thank you for your consideration.

We can do it! Keystone: Small but Mighty!