

Name: Thomas "Tommy" LaPonsey

Position: Fire Commissioner Kootenai County Fire and Rescue

Website: Developing

Tell us a little about yourself and your family, how long you have lived in the area and your occupation.

I am a retired Fire Captain Paramedic from Southern California. I have an amazing wife Kate and 3 children, my daughter Lizzie (30 year old professional living in California) and two sons, Liam (21 year old senior at the University of Idaho) and Aiden (20 year old also attending University of Idaho).

I am an unapologetic Christian conservative who loves God, my family and my country. I have a strong desire for freedom with minimal government intervention. I believe in a constitutional representative republic and I want to keep it.

We moved to North Idaho in 2014 after buying a lot in the Cougar Bay area in 2012. We fell in love with North Idaho instantly after feeling the magic of this special and unique area of our country. North Idaho allowed us to openly express our conservative Christian values without the fear of repercussion from those with opposing views.

I currently work for the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office as a Community Service Officer. I needed to return to work for health insurance and the opportunity became available to serve the community once again in the public safety responder realm and I jumped at the opportunity.

1. Do you have experience as an elected official and if so, what was your position, and how would you describe your voting record?

I have never held or even considered running for a political office before, but I feel the need to not just be another one of the chronic complainers and enter into the fight to save our Republic.

I have been a lifelong Republican, voting for President Reagan in 1984, and have pretty much voted for the Party down ticket ever since. I have not always felt strongly about some of our candidates, but remained loyal to the Party.

2. Please tell us about your activity as a Republican. Have you previously voted for candidates of other parties? If yes, explain.

I have taken a more active role since moving to North Idaho in my political activities. I attend many events and fundraisers, such as the Lincoln Day Dinners, Ladies in Red Gala, Idaho Family First Policy Center Gala, Freedom Fighters and supporting several other groups.

I have worked on several campaigns (i.e. Senator Carl Bjerke and CdA School Trustee Lesli Bjerke) and assisted with many 2022 campaigns by stuffing packets, going door to door with campaign literature and passing out KCRCC sample ballots during early voting.

3. What is the purpose of government?

The purpose of the government is to provide for the common defense, levy taxes and to create laws. However, I feel the true role is to prevent anarchy and chaos amongst the people with as little infringement on personal freedoms as possible. The government is there to insure Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness for our citizens through a representative self-governed people. The government is not there to tell the people what to do, but to do what the people tell them to do. Our government has long lost sight of those principles and it is time we return to those values.

4. Describe why you are running for this particular office. What are your qualifications? What are your goals?

I am a resident of Kootenai County Fire and Rescue (Subdistrict 4) and I feel as a retired Fire Captain Paramedic that I understand the role of the fire service and will help to see they are providing the best service to the community, while maintaining fiduciary responsibility. As a member of our local Firefighter association, I have worked in negotiations for the best outcomes for both sides to reach an acceptable common goal. I worked as a paramedic coordinator, so I understand how to work with the County and State oversight. I have served on many department committees and task force groups, so I understand the role of a commissioner as being only one of five opinions.

5. Describe experiences where you are or have been engaged such as non-profit organizations, clubs, churches, boards, commissions, etc., where you have been of service to others

I have served as a Board Member of TESH for over two years. TESH is a non profit group that helps disabled and challenged people find working roles to become contributing members of our community. I am a member of the Eagles and attend

Candlelight Christian Fellowship for church. I have volunteered for my son's sports teams and assisted with fundraising for several groups.

6. Do you describe yourself as fiscally conservative? Please, elaborate.

Yes, I do describe myself as a fiscal conservative in both my personal finances and how our government spends taxpayer money. I have seen first hand the waste in government departments with the "we better spend it or we lose it" attitude. Our citizens understand the need for certain aspects of our government, such as public safety, education and community services. It is the duty of the governing bodies to be responsible with other people's money when providing these services. It is always easiest to spend other people's money for things you want or need because you don't have a personal stake in what you are spending. When granted power over others, you must have tremendous restraint over how you spend their money to serve them. We must understand filling a true need for serving the people over a want to have to serve the people.

7. Do you consider yourself socially conservative? Please elaborate.

Yes, I am a social conservative. It is amazing to me that if you say you believe in absolute truth, or that there is only one truth, you are now considered a dangerous extremist. I believe in God and the fear of God is the first step in knowledge. Knowledge is the understanding of truth and living by the principles of truth. I have a core set of values that I have been taught and have lived by for nearly 60 years. I am sorry if your feelings go against the truth, but I refuse to disavow my values because of your feelings. I will never "be woke" like the denying truth sheeple that go along to get social media likes or approval from people who live in false realities. I believe in law and order, where justice is blind and good people are rewarded for their actions. The Ten Commandments are simple rules that if we just tried to use only those rules this world would be a much better place.

8. Describe which party platform best aligns with your positions on public policy (Republican, Democrat, Libertarian or Constitutional Party) and where do you disagree with that platform.

The Republican platform and its values best align with my personal political beliefs. I believe in small government, lower taxes, pro-life in all cases, maximum personal freedoms, law and order, personal responsibility and strong personal defense as well as strong national defense. I do not know the entire platform, but have enough of an understanding of it to know that I wanted to be a Republican in a Catholic Kennedy

Democrat family when I turned 18. I have not always agreed with many of the Republican political stances and selections for candidates (RINOs), but I have always voted Republican even when I had to hold my nose to do it. I feel in North Idaho the Republican Party has done a much better job than the rest of the state, and significantly better than the national party representation.

9. Do you have any history of tax liens, criminal record, bankruptcy or conflict of interest that may affect your future decisions or desirability to be voted into office?

No, I have been through several FBI background investigations as a Firefighter Paramedic and just recently went through an extremely extensive background investigation lasting several weeks with a 5 hour polygraph test before gaining employment with the Kootenai County Sheriff's Office. My finances are in order and I have no criminal background. I am a happily married family man and I live a fairly boring life. I have done well in my life and am blessed to be where I am today. I have not been a perfect man, but I attempt to follow in the footsteps of the only perfect man who ever walked the earth in my daily life.

10. Describe how you will make yourself available to your constituents and vote as their representative with FORTITUDE, adhering to the values and answers you have stated above.

This country is not a democracy, but a constitutional representative republic. I will not be making decisions in my position as I see fit, but as directed by my constituents. I will do my best to make myself available via a website, email and personal conversations. I know it is impossible to meet all your constituents for their input, so that is why you let them know who you are ahead of the election. They will pick who they feel will best represent their own values and will trust I will honor their values. I have been an open book most of my life and an easily approachable person and I will continue to be the same person I have always been if I'm lucky enough to get elected as Fire Commissioner.