



Fraternal Order of Police

Manatee County Lodge 70

POLITICAL SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidate Name: Sari Lindroos-Valimaki

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Political Screening Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Sari Lindroos-Valimaki

Public Office Sought: Manatee County Commissioner District 7At-large

Have you received any endorsements from any other organization(s) for your current campaign? If yes, please list the endorsements.

I have received endorsements from the Florida National Organization for Women (NOW), the Manatee Democratic Party, and support from all associated caucuses. Florida NOW is dedicated to advocating for equality and justice for women and marginalized groups. They support candidates who are committed to protecting women's rights, promoting social justice, and ensuring equal opportunities for all. The endorsement from the Manatee Democratic Party and its caucuses underscores the strong backing I have within the local Democratic community.

If elected, what would be your top priorities, and more specifically what changes would you push/support for Law Enforcement?

My top priorities include enhancing public safety, improving community-police relations, and ensuring adequate resources for mental health support within law enforcement. Specifically, I would advocate for the following changes:

- Support the expansion of the DETER program to reduce impaired driving and recidivism through educational and rehabilitative sanctions.
- Advocate for advanced training programs for officers to improve crisis intervention, particularly in mental health situations.
- Promote increased investment in technology to improve efficiency, transparency, and accountability within the Sheriff's Office. This includes modernizing communication systems, deploying body cameras, and utilizing data analytics to better allocate resources and predict crime trends.
- Encourage the promotion of community policing initiatives to foster trust and cooperation between law enforcement and residents. This involves regular community meetings, involvement in local events, and developing programs that encourage positive interactions between officers and the community.
- Advocate for focused recruitment efforts to attract a diverse and highly qualified workforce. This includes competitive salaries, benefits, and career development opportunities to ensure we attract and retain the best talent.

Will you be open to considering helping the FOP with the local delegation on issues that affect law enforcement?

Absolutely. I am committed to working collaboratively with the Fraternal Order of Police and the local delegation on issues that affect law enforcement. Ensuring the safety and well-being of our community is a top priority, and I believe that open communication and cooperation with law enforcement agencies are essential to achieving this goal.

As an IT and cybersecurity professional, I understand the importance of security at all levels. I have great respect for law enforcement and the critical role they play in maintaining public safety. I am aware of the challenges officers face daily and the dedication required to protect our community. My background in cybersecurity has given me a unique perspective on the complexities of security, both physical and digital, and I am eager to leverage this experience to support and enhance our law enforcement capabilities.

I will actively support initiatives that enhance public safety, improve working conditions for officers, and promote effective law enforcement practices.

In terms of priorities, how do you rate the importance of Public Safety in Manatee County?

Public safety is of utmost importance in Manatee County. Ensuring that our residents feel safe and secure is a fundamental priority, as it is the foundation for a thriving and prosperous community. As a County

Commissioner, I believe that a strong focus on public safety is essential for maintaining the quality of life that our residents expect and deserve.

My commitment to public safety is driven by my extensive background in IT and cybersecurity, where security at all levels is paramount. I understand that public safety encompasses not only preventing and responding to crime but also preparing for and mitigating emergencies and natural disasters. By prioritizing public safety, we can build a resilient community that is well-equipped to handle various challenges.

Furthermore, enhancing public safety involves investing in our law enforcement agencies, supporting their efforts with the necessary resources, and fostering strong community relations. It also means addressing underlying issues such as mental health, substance abuse, and social inequality, which can contribute to crime and insecurity.

In summary, public safety is a top priority for me, and I am dedicated to advocating for policies and initiatives that will enhance the safety and well-being of all Manatee County residents.

Given the continued increase in population and growth here in Manatee County, how important is it to you to increase staffing levels in the Sheriff's Office?

Increasing staffing levels in the Sheriff's Office is critically important given the continued population growth in Manatee County. As our community expands, so too does the demand for public safety services. Ensuring that the Sheriff's Office is adequately staffed is essential for maintaining law and order, responding promptly to emergencies, and providing the high level of service that our residents expect.

Population growth brings diverse challenges, including higher call volumes, increased traffic, and more significant demands on community policing efforts. By bolstering staffing levels, we can ensure that deputies are not overburdened and can perform their duties effectively and safely. This also allows for more proactive policing measures, such as crime prevention programs and community engagement initiatives.

I am committed to advocating for the necessary budget and resources to support an increase in staffing levels for the Sheriff's Office. This includes competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain top talent, as well as providing ongoing training and development opportunities to ensure our deputies are well-prepared to meet the evolving needs of our community.

In summary, increasing staffing levels in the Sheriff's Office is a top priority for me, as it is fundamental to ensuring the safety and security of Manatee County's residents.

Do you feel that the Sheriff's Office in Manatee County is currently funded at proper levels?

While the Manatee County Sheriff's Office is doing commendable work with the resources available, there is always room for assessment and potential improvement. Given the continued population growth and evolving challenges in public safety, it is crucial to ensure that the Sheriff's Office has the necessary funding to address current and future needs effectively.

Proper funding is essential for several reasons:

Adequate staffing levels to handle increased demands and ensure deputies are not overburdened.

Investment in modern technology to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability.

Ongoing training and development programs to prepare officers for diverse situations, particularly in areas like mental health crisis intervention and community policing.

Resources for community engagement initiatives to foster trust and cooperation between law enforcement and residents.

I believe it is important to conduct regular reviews of the budget and resource allocation to ensure that the Sheriff's Office is well-equipped to maintain public safety. I am committed to advocating for sufficient funding that reflects the growing needs of our community while ensuring fiscal responsibility.

Is there any other information about you that you feel is pertinent to the FOP in considering you for endorsement?

With over 30 years of experience in IT and cybersecurity, I bring a unique perspective on how technology can enhance law enforcement operations. My background has equipped me with a deep understanding of the importance of security at all levels, and I have great respect for the roles and challenges that law enforcement officers face daily.

As a long-time resident of Florida and Manatee County since 2018, and the only Democratic candidate, I am deeply committed to improving public safety and fostering a community where everyone feels secure. My commitment to hardening the Network and Industrial Control Systems for municipalities and organizations and my work in validating the CISSP exam demonstrate my dedication to protecting our community from both physical and digital threats.

Moreover, I have always prioritized empathy, kindness, and respect for others in my personal and professional life. Integrity is something that I take seriously, and I am accountable for my actions, always willing to learn and listen. These values drive my approach to public service and my commitment to working collaboratively with law enforcement to create a safer, more inclusive community.

Additionally, my campaign has received endorsements from the Florida National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Manatee Democratic Party, along with support from all associated caucuses. These endorsements reflect my alignment with values of equality, justice, and community well-being.

In summary, my extensive experience, deep commitment to public safety, and strong community values make me a candidate who is well-suited to support and advocate for law enforcement in Manatee County.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kind Regards,

Sari Lindroos-Valimaki