

COALITION FOR A BETTER MEMPHIS
Shelby County Sheriff Candidate Questionnaire
Election Date: May 4, 2010

Name: William P. "Bill" Oldham

Section 1: Qualifications and Background (1 question)

Section 2: Vision and Strategies (3 questions)

Section 3: Improving the System (2 questions)

1. QUALIFICATIONS AND BACKGROUND

- 1. Qualifications: Describe briefly your qualifications for holding the office of Shelby County sheriff. *(Please answer in the space below. You may attach a resume or other description to provide us with additional detail.)***

I have over 34 years of experience in law enforcement. For the past 7 1/2 years I have served as the Chief Deputy of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office. Prior to that, I served for over 27 years with the Memphis Police Department, where I rose through the ranks from patrolman to Director. From 1991 until the end of 1999, I served on the Senior Command Staff of the MPD, first as a Deputy Chief, then as Deputy Director and finally as Director. During my 7 1/2 years as Chief Deputy I have been part of the Command Team that has brought professionalism, effectiveness and National Accreditation to our Jail and the Law Enforcement Division of the SCSO. For these reasons I believe I am qualified to seek the Office of Sheriff of Shelby County. (Please see attached resume)

- 2. What events or experiences caused you to decide to run for this office? When Sheriff Mark H. Luttrell, Jr. made the sudden choice to seek the Office of Shelby County Mayor, my family and I had an important decision to make about our future, and the future of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office. Part of my decision was based on a sense of loyalty to the men and women of the Sheriff's Office who have supported our agenda of change and played a major role in making our agency a professional and nationally accredited organization. The other part of my decision was based on my belief that I am the most qualified candidate and that my experience as Chief Deputy of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office and as a Deputy Chief, Deputy Director and Director of the Memphis Police Department has prepared me to seek election to the Office of Sheriff of Shelby County.**

NAME: WILLIAM P. "BILL" OLDHAM

2. VISION AND STRATEGIES

- 1. Law enforcement philosophy: What is the best way of reducing crime in a community? What best practices should we be considering, in Shelby County that have reduced crime in comparable counties? What is the best role for the sheriff's department in this?**

We must work with our local, state, and federal law enforcement partners as well as neighborhood, civic and faith based leaders to make Shelby County as safe as possible. I support the Operation Safe Communities Initiatives. This is a plan developed by the private and public sectors to make Shelby County one of the safest communities of its size. We worked with the organizers and the Memphis/Shelby County Crime Commission in developing the fifteen strategies of the Operation Safe Community Initiative. We use the Data Smart Policing Model to deploy deputies using strategy based upon sound data and research. We belong to twelve task forces in collaboration with local, state and federal law enforcement partners to attack crime and criminals who know no jurisdictional boundaries. We pursue every opportunity to share information and develop partnerships with all law enforcement agencies in Shelby County and the surrounding area. We support vertical prosecution and additional resources for our DA's Office. We have developed programs to mentor youths, work with youthful offenders to educate them and turn them around. We support Drug Court and Assist with its funding. Some of these "Best Practices" were brought to our community to assist us in addressing issues of high importance. The SCSO should be a leader and a resource in making our county safer.

- 2. Management philosophy: What is the best way of managing a law enforcement agency with several distinct missions, including law enforcement and jail management?**

In order to maintain the public trust we must be an organization of integrity and professionalism. We must be responsive, accessible, inclusive and accountable to the citizens we serve. It starts with me. I am accountable to our citizens and our employees.

The key to the professional, efficient and effective management of a Sheriff's Office is to clearly articulate your vision and assemble a leadership team of professionals with experience and integrity and assist them in making your vision a reality. As required by A.C.A. and C.A.L.E.A. goals and objectives are established each year and bench marked with desired results, responsible parties and time lines, thus building accountability into the process. The planning process allows for input and ownership from the executive staff which then fosters team building and inclusion.

We would also provide opportunities for the staff to receive the best executive training available. We would annually review "Best Practices" from other local and national organizations to identify those that could assist us in our mission.

Continued on next page

NAME: WILLIAM P. "BILL" OLDHAM

When feasible and necessary, we will bring in organizations, such as the Police Executive Research Forum as we did in 2004 to do an efficiency study for law enforcement and organizations such as Carter Goble Lee to put together a Jail Master Plan as we did in 2007.

- 3. Jail costs: How can the jail be managed humanely, efficiently and effectively – and cost less money?**

Since this administration took office, we have cut unnecessary staff and out sourced some services saving some 14 million dollars. At the same time, by introducing accountability and a professional business plan, the jail is no longer under federal oversight and has attained an A.C.A. Accreditation as well as being recertified by the Tennessee Corrections Institute. We are also free of the Department of Justice oversight for the first time in over a decade. There must be continued review of the jail, its management and population to maintain our focus to keep it where it is today. In that effort, studies such as the 2007 Jail Master Plan should be updated as well as reviews of the best practices in jail management from around the country to determine if any would be applicable to our mission of running a humane, efficient and effective jail.

3. IMPROVING THE SYSTEM

- 1. Shrinking serve area: How can you manage the law-enforcement side of the sheriff's department as city annexations shrink its service area?**

Our 2004 Police Executive Research Forum Efficiency Study looked at the impact of the annexations and determined that we had lost territory but gained population in our primary service area. But for this hypothetical question, we will assume that there are additional plans for annexation. We could bring in a group such as the Police Executive Research Forum to determine the impact of the pending loss of service area. They would look at this area to determine the potential change in service levels and if any adjustments are required in staffing. If staffing schedules reveal potential manpower reductions or cost savings that could be one approach. Another would be to take those freed by the loss of territory and reassign them based on data from the 2004 P.E.R.F. Study or the 2009 Manpower Allocation Study recently completed as required by C.A.L.E.A. Both of the studies reported shortages in our manpower in the Law Enforcement Division. Studies of service levels should be part of an annual review to make sure the organization is staffed efficiently.

- 2. Community relations: What are the best ways of strengthening relations between the sheriff's department and the diverse communities it serves? The best way to strengthen relations between the Sheriff's Office and the community is to have an accountable, responsive, transparent and inclusive operational philosophy. This administration has been and will continue to be a problem solver for our community. We will continue to build partnerships**

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SHELBY COUNTY SHERIFF CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE MAY 2010

NAME: WILLIAM P. "BILL" OLDHAM

with neighborhood, civic and Faith based groups. One example is a partnership we have with Rhodes College and the surrounding Hollywood/Chelsea Neighborhood. In this collaboration, Dr. Kirby and members of the neighborhood were joined by MPD, SCSO, Code Enforcement, the Heath Department and Public Works. Working together, these various public service disciplines and the citizens focus on issues important to the neighborhood, solving problems together. This model was so successful, we have started six other collaborations throughout Memphis and Shelby County. Another avenue for better community relations is the conduct Citizens Academies to educate the citizens we serve about the Sheriff's Office. We have graduated twelve classes since 2002. We also openly recruit volunteers for our volunteer services, emergency services and reserve programs. Our Crime Prevention Bureau serves all of the high schools and middle schools in the Shelby County School System, giving us an opportunity to interact with the students and staffs building relationships on a daily basis. The Speakers Bureau offers over thirty instructional crime prevention programs. These officers also assist in setting up Neighborhood Watch Groups and strengthening relationships and building partnerships. Each deputy has an opportunity to build trust and relationships through their interaction with the citizens we serve by treating everyone with dignity and respect and that premise will be a focus of our officer training. Our recruiting strategy should also reflect the diversity of our community.

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