

August 14, 2024

Mr. Scott Clem, Chairman
Campbell County Republican Party
c/o Campbell County Elections Office
500 S. Gillette Avenue, Suite 1600
Gillette, Wyoming 82716

Re: Vacancy in the Office of County Commissioner

Dear Chairman Clem and Members of the Central Committee:

I am passionate about Wyoming and Campbell County. During my seven years as a Campbell County Commissioner, I helped to develop and communicate a strategy for economic diversification, secure state and federal grants for these efforts, and oversee their implementation, while continuing to advocate for our legacy industries. At the local governance level, I supported our county departments and staff, participated in budgeting for the county's largest ever increase in reserves, and participated in negotiations for revisions to joint powers board agreements.

My vision for Campbell County built upon the investments and successes of the State of Wyoming, including the Integrated Test Center (ITC), and focused on economic development, higher education, research and commercialization of new technology, and policies that supported quality of life.

My thoughts were backed up with action. I helped to champion a best-in-class natural resource land use plan which detailed county positions and provided a framework for litigation. The success of this plan was recognized by the Wyoming Legislature who later provided funds through the Select Federal Natural Resource Management Committee so that every Wyoming county could complete a similar initiative.

Working with my fellow commissioners and the Wyoming County Commissioners Association (WCCA), Campbell County actively expanded its engagement in both statewide and federal actions. As a branch of government, and given the region's impact on energy markets, the county had and has now the potential for an outsized impact on state and federal policy. This effort led to the engagement of natural resource and land use professionals which, in consort with my own work, led to tangible results. Direct successes included: (a) coal leases moving forward during the Obama administration's coal lease moratorium; (b) revisions to oil and gas leasing rules that involve split estates; (c) changes to tribal consultation rules for traditional cultural properties; (d) changes to rules for related entity treatment of returns for coal royalties; (e) changes to the BLM's Buffalo Field Office RMP; (f) updates to the Thunder Basin National Grasslands RMP dealing with prairie dog management; and (g) visits to Campbell County by senior officials, department heads, and assistant secretaries in the Department of the Interior and Department of Energy.

Another result of this work was the development of a collaboration between the county, the Governor's Policy Office, industry, and as needed, other organizations, to coordinate the submission of comments, discuss upcoming policy actions, and combine efforts to increase our joint reach. The group's once-a-month meetings became the place to be for natural resource and land use industry professionals.

As an appointment of Governor Matt Mead to the ENDOW (Economically Needed Diversification Options for Wyoming) Executive Council, I chaired the Value-Added Natural Resources Committee and lobbied for the further identification of transmission corridors for both traditional and CO₂ pipelines and

electrical transmission infrastructure. The experiences and knowledge I gained through ENDOW reinforced my beliefs about the importance of education to economic development and diversification, where my part of the committee recognized the need for additional technical education, apprenticeship, alternative credentials, and retention of graduates within Wyoming.

As we all know, market forces and focuses on climate change are decreasing demand for Powder River Basin (PRB) coal. To address this reality, I supported research and commercialization of technologies related to Carbon Capture Utilization and Sequestration (CCUS); enhancement of coal resources for products like activated carbon, carbon fiber, coal/gas to liquids; and other transformative technologies. I helped to develop additional partnerships between the University of Wyoming (UW) and Campbell County.

I am a product of Campbell County School District schools, attending 4-J Elementary School, Sage Valley Junior High School, and Campbell County High School. I have a master's degree in Real Estate and Construction Management from the Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver and a B.S. in Finance and a B.S. in Management Information Systems from the University of Wyoming.

I am a parent of four children, with my two sons attending Buffalo Ridge Elementary School, and my twin daughters attending Children's Development Services of Campbell County. I grew up on my family's ranch south of Gillette and I am familiar with our community.

On local issues, I participated in the single largest increase in the county's savings during my time as a commissioner. Contrary to popular belief, it was not that there were no other needs or priorities where those saved monies could have been spent. However, our board saw the value in savings for the county given the potential for violent swings in assessed valuation and legacy industries seeing production declines.

As a commissioner, I participated in the single largest revisions to the funding structure of the Campbell County Joint Powers Fire Board, setting up an increased contribution from the City of Gillette, and as a member of the Campbell County Joint Powers Land Board, the initial transformation to significantly increase City of Gillette annual operations funding.

The big question hanging out there is regarding my previous resignation from the Board of Commissioners in 2020. At the time, I was beginning a complicated divorce proceeding, and my time and attention needed to be focused on my kids. With that behind me, I am committed to seeing this opportunity through. I weathered multiple difficult times with the county, including the single-day layoff of 500 Arch and Peabody employees, the Blackjewel implosion, and both record budgets and significant declines. I will bring this knowledge and perspective back to the board should I be selected for this important role.

As requested in your advertisement for the vacancy, I have attached a completed application and resume to this letter.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Christensen

APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTEMENT TO FILL VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF CAMPBELL COUNTY COMISSIONER

Please remit by August 14, 2024 @ 5pm, to lauren.tryon11@gmail.com OR norberto@norbertoorellana.com.

Hardcopies may also be submitted to the Campbell County Clerk's Office:

**Campbell County Courthouse
500 S. Gillette Avenue; Suite 1600
Gillette, WY 82716**

Applicant Name	Mark A. Christensen	Telephone Number	(307) 257-2308
Age	41	Registered Republican (Y/N)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Address	P.O. Box 3168 Gillette, Wyoming 82717	Years as Resident of Campbell County	41 years
Education	M.S. in Real Estate & Construction Management (2006) Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver - Denver, Colorado B.S. in Finance and B.S. in Management Information Systems (2005) University of Wyoming - Laramie, Wyoming		
Work Experience	Owner/Manager of a number of entities: real estate development, construction, and creative services. Grew County 17 into the most read and engaged media source in northeast Wyoming prior to selling it to new owners. Payroll Manager/HR Coordinator/Lease Negotiator for family companies: manage monthly payroll and reporting for family's ranching interests in Wyoming, Montana, and Nebraska. Negotiate leases, SUAs, etc.		
Community Service	Campbell County Fair Volunteer (2002 to Present); Campbell County 4-H Leader (2002 to Present); Penny Power Coalition Volunteer (2022); Energy Capital Economic Development Board Member (2017 to 2018, 2019 to 2020); Campbell County Public Land Board Member (2006 to 2012); Campbell County Healthcare Foundation Board Member (2007 to 2012).		
Past Political Experience (Boards, Elected Office, Party Activities, etc.)	Campbell County Commissioner (2013 to 2020): elected to two terms; served as board chairman in 2014 and 2018; oversaw an increase in reserves of \$60 million; served for six years on audit committee; offered regular testimony on natural resources, extraction, tax, and economic diversification; championed a best-in-class natural resource land use plan; sought and helped enact legislative changes for ad-valorem mineral taxes and local government investments.		
Other Pertinent Background Information	ENDOW (Economically Needed Diversification Options for Wyoming) Executive Council Member and chair of the value-added natural resources committee. Life-long Campbell County citizen with four children (two in Campbell County schools, two at Children's Development Services of Campbell County); grew up on family ranch south of Gillette; graduated from Campbell County High School. Highly effective developing relationships with state and federal elected officials and agencies.		
Why Does Candidate Desire to Become a commissioner	I love Campbell County and want it to succeed. Our community has so much to offer with good leadership and I loved my time as a county commissioner. More broadly, our kids should all have the same opportunities that this community made available to us. For the first time in history, there is a good chance our kids' lives won't be as good as our own. That saddens me. The best way to overcome that reality is through good leadership, good vision, and a long-term commitment to excellence. It means having tough conversations as a community and developing new leaders. More selfishly, I have seen the work that I and previous commissioners, elected officials, and county staff put into making our county the incredible place it is. I don't want to see that previous work squandered and I believe we're coming upon a point that will set for the next 50 years the future of Campbell County and the quality of life the people here will enjoy.		

APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT TO FILL VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF CAMPBELL COUNTY COMMISSIONER

<p>What are the Top Five Issues Facing Campbell County? <i>The issues facing Campbell County and Campbell County Government are related, but different. These are the most pressing.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Campbell County and Campbell County Government’s most pressing long-term issue is the transition from coal (and fossil fuels) to renewable energy. Unmanaged, the transition will lead to fundamental changes in community employment, needed services, and government budgets. 2. Campbell County Government’s most immediate issue is getting county business done timely and in a way that benefits its citizens (e.g. audit, budget, staff vacancies, employee moral, social service agencies, and joint powers boards). <p>Other issues facing Campbell County Government:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. A decrease in collaboration between local government entities on real issues. 4. Recruiting, retaining, and developing staff and making adjustments to benefit programs. 5. Providing meaningful comments, influence, and policy guidance at the state and federal level to support local industry and business.
<p>How Does Applicant Plan to Enhance the County Commission?</p>	<p>The majority of the county’s most pressing issues come from deficiencies in management, new employees and board members, and a lack of long-term vision. I work collaboratively and like to develop consensus on decisions. I believe that regardless of your own individual feelings on an issue, once the vote has been taken, the board as a whole should support the decision(s) in order to make it successful. With that said, I believe that open, frank, and thorough discussions regarding county business benefit the board and community, and that boards that cannot publicly disagree lack either original thought or a commitment to transparency. With regard to the most pressing needs, I served for six years on the county’s audit committee. I understand the process, the deficiencies, and what expectations need to be set for staff. I also have a good understanding of the county’s employment and HR policies, and understand some of the angst that currently exists within the organization. I previously helped to set a long-term vision for the county and also know how to work as a member of a board. I know how to work with state and federal officials, agency heads, and administrations of both parties to get things done.</p> <p>What I most hope to bring to the board is consistency, an understanding of issues and policies, and to help get things back to normal. In general, county government should be boring. The county has both statutory and <i>community-expected</i> functions to deliver, many of which are not currently getting done. The county also has a ceremonial role to inspire its citizens and make decisions to promote its organizational stability and its citizens’ long-term quality of life.</p>
<p>Does Applicant Intend to Run for Election if Appointed?</p>	<p>Though I had originally planned to serve only two terms (eight years) as a county commissioner, I believe that what the county needs now is some consistency until current and future elected officials (and staff) can get familiar with the organization and the positions. There are currently a large number of county elected officials with limited county government experience. If selected to fill this vacancy, I will complete this term and run in the coming election for the same position. After that term (if elected), I will have served for 13 total years in the role and believe that others should take over.</p>

PROFILE

Natural resource policy expert, entrepreneur, and past elected official with a passion for education. M.S. in Real Estate and Construction Management, with undergraduate degrees in Finance and Management Information Systems. Ability to form and manage diverse teams which achieve exceptional results. As a county commissioner, willing to make difficult and unpopular decisions for the long-term betterment of the organization and community. Recognized ability to analyze complex data from multiple sources and articulate a vision that can be communicated to the public. Set vision for Campbell County's economic transformation through value-added natural resources and a knowledge-based economy taking advantage of the area's technical and blue-collar workforce. Creative, challenge driven, and motivating leader with a proven track record handling multiple projects. Strong communication skills and focus on building long-term relationships with stakeholders.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Owner / Manager

January 2004 – Present

Mark Christensen & Co., LLC - Gillette, WY

Established holding company for subsidiary companies focused on areas of interest. Subsidiaries focus on real estate development (greenfield residential, commercial, industrial) in Wyoming with anticipated expansion into surrounding states; residential construction; and creative services (branding, media buying, news, publishing). Direct day-to-day operations, set areas of focus, hire staff, perform finance and accounting activities, payroll, and IT functions. Transitioned from previous ownership structure post-divorce. Grew County 17 into the most read and engaged media source in northeast Wyoming before sale to new owners.

Payroll Manager / HR Coordinator / Lease Negotiator

January 2014 – Present

CJR Ranch, LLC, J & R Christensen Land, LLC, Christensen Minerals, LLC - Gillette, WY

Manage monthly payroll for family's ranching interests in Wyoming, Montana, and Nebraska, including all reporting requirements. Oversee HR needs for approximately 20 regular employees. Assist with negotiating and drafting surface use agreements and mineral leases for family land and mineral interests.

County Commissioner

January 2013 – January 2020

Campbell County, Wyoming - Gillette, WY

Elected to two terms on the Campbell County Board of Commissioners. Served as chairman of the board in calendar years 2014 and 2018. Annual budget of \$100 million, surging in past years to as much as \$180 million, with 600 employees. Increased reserves by \$60 million. Chairman of the Wyoming County Commissioners Association's Energy, Environment, and Land Use committee. Regular service on the Audit Committee and credited with establishment of Finance Committee. Offered regular testimony on natural resources, extraction, tax, and economic diversification. Expert on opportunities for value-added enhancement of natural resources that oversaw and architected Campbell County's blueprint for development of a knowledge/research-based economy around value-added enhancement of natural resources. Advocated for additional funding for Gillette College to pursue alternative credentials. Championed a best-in-class natural resource land use plan to detail county positions and establish a framework for litigation. Regularly collaborated with state legislators, state elected officials, federal agencies/agency heads, and federal delegation. Negotiated agreements with other local government entities. Developed diverse teams of staff, consultants, elected officials, lobbying organizations, and representatives from state and federal government to influence natural resource policy for the betterment of Campbell County and Wyoming.

Private Equity Intern

June 2004 – August 2004

Cheyenne Capital Fund, L.P. - Denver, CO

Performed investment due diligence, evaluated potential investments, developed presentation materials, worked on an additional commitment of capital, and researched public records laws across the U.S. to develop a working strategy for confidentially providing documents to the State of Wyoming and potential statute revisions.

EDUCATION

Daniels College of Business at the University of Denver - Denver, CO

M.S. in Real Estate and Construction Management

Franklin L. Burns School of Real Estate and Construction Management

Graduation: August 2006, Grade-Point Average: 4.00

University of Wyoming - Laramie, WY

B.S. in Finance and B.S. in Management Information Systems

Graduation: May 2005

UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

Executive Council Member

January 2017 – December 2020

ENDOW (Economically Needed Diversification Options for Wyoming)

Appointed by Wyoming Governor Matt Mead to a four-year term on Executive Council tasked with developing a comprehensive plan to diversify Wyoming's economy. Council presented a detailed socioeconomic study and 20-year diversification strategy. Served as chairman of the Value-Added Natural Resources Committee. Advocated that Wyoming reform its tax structure as part of its economic development activities.

Congressional Testimony

U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives Committees

- The POWER Counties Act before the House Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources (April 18, 2018) at the invitation of Subcommittee Chairman Paul Gosar and Wyoming Representative Liz Cheney. Testimony focused on the need for energy-producing counties to retain a percentage of federal mineral royalties to fuel economic transformation in a clean-energy world.
- Breaking the Logjam at BLM: Examining Ways to More Efficiently Process Permits for Energy Production on Federal Lands before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee (July 29, 2014) at the invitation of Chair Mary Landrieu, Ranking Member Lisa Murkowski, and Wyoming Senator John Barrasso.

HONORS & COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Campbell County Fair Volunteer & Campbell County 4-H Leader (2002 – Present). Assisted with marketing, transitioning of fair events to younger generations, and oversight of annual Youth Livestock Sale.
 - Penny Power Coalition Volunteer (2022). Assisted the Penny Power Coalition PAC with marketing advice and design for the renewal of the Optional 1% Sales Tax.
 - Energy Capital Economic Development Board Member (2017 – 2018, 2019 – 2020). Helped Energy Capital Economic Development focus on rebranding and changing fundraising focus. Provided general oversight and guidance on economic development initiatives in northeast Wyoming. Advocated for the “carbon valley” concept to focus on research, commercialization, and enhancement of natural resources.
 - Singularity University (March 2018). Participated in Singularity University workshop as part of the ENDOW Executive Council focusing on the future of work, economic disrupters, and the changing role of technology.
 - Campbell County Public Land Board Member (2006 – 2012). Served as a board member, treasurer, vice chairman, and chairman of the board overseeing CAM-PLEX Multi Event Facilities. Advocated for changes to the Wyoming Center to improve long-term usability of the building, assisted with theater bookings, placed capital focus on maintenance of existing facilities, and advocated for an increase in City of Gillette annual operations funding.
 - Campbell County Healthcare Foundation Board Member (2007 – 2012). Served as a board member and treasurer. Assisted with fundraising and construction oversight for the Close to Home Hospice Hospitality House.
 - University of Denver NAIOP Rocky Mountain Real Estate Challenge Winning Team (2006). Finance lead on team examining redevelopment options for RTD's Market Street Station in downtown Denver. Plan selected by a panel of subject matter experts and presented to approximately 300 at the Denver Convention Center.
 - University of Wyoming President's Honor Scholarship (Fall 2001 – Spring 2005).
 - Mortar Board Senior Honorary at the University of Wyoming (2004 – 2005).
 - University of Wyoming President's Senior Class Ambassadors (2004 – 2005). Interacted with the University's most influential donors as part of group developed by the UW President and Foundation.
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