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McPheeters announces candidacy for Pueblo County Commissioner

PUEBLO – Pueblo native Paula McPheeters announced Thursday that she is a candidate for the Pueblo County Commissioner District 2 seat currently held by Daneya Esgar. McPheeters made the announcement at Watertower Place, speaking in front of a crowd of family, friends, and supporters.

“We need frank conversations about what makes our community safe, vibrant, and healthy,” she said. “My priorities are public safety, infrastructure, and economic development. We all know we have challenges with each of these priorities. The reality is we must tackle each one with the understanding that they won’t be solved overnight. We need thoughtful planning and decision making to get things done.”

McPheeters, 53, is the daughter of a steelworker. She attended South High School and the University of Southern Colorado (now CSU Pueblo), majoring in political science, and later earned a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Colorado-Denver. For more than two decades, she has worked at Pueblo Community College in the areas of budgeting and grant management. She is actively involved in numerous civic organizations and recently completed a three-year term on the Pueblo County Retail Marijuana Sales and Excise Taxes Oversight Committee. In her final year, she served as committee chair.

“I’m a Gen Xer. We’ve grown up with doom and gloom predictions about our future,” she said. “But I’m also an optimist. I am a person of strong faith. We can never lose hope that things can get better – that each of us, in our own way, can contribute and make a difference.”

Addressing the partisanship and grandstanding that have dominated politics in recent years, McPheeters emphasized Puebloans’ diversity and ability to see beyond labels.

“Pueblo is not monolithic in its politics. We have voted for Democrats, Republicans, and Independents,” she said. “We vote for the person, not the party.”

“We need leadership that raises the bar (and) 2024 presents us with an opportunity to change the way Pueblo does politics,” she said. “Petty political gamesmanship is not what Puebloans are about. You want leadership and results.”

McPheeters said she will spend the next year “listening and learning,” developing common ground to address the major issues faced by Pueblo County residents.

“I don’t have all the answers to every challenge we face, but by collaborating, I will learn what is needed to do this job well,” she said. “You may not agree with every decision I make, but you can trust my heart to serve everyone in Pueblo County.”

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