

Candidate for Mecklenburg County Sheriff – Antoine M. Ensley

ANTOINE M. ENSLEY, SR., 48, Democrat, is making his third run for the office of Mecklenburg Sheriff. He has worked for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department for fourteen years in a broad range of capacities and was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. He is the former Chief of Police for Fletcher, North Carolina and currently works as a Human Resources Program Manager for the city of Charlotte. He has both a Bachelor's and Master's degree and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Government Municipal and County Administration program.

ON 287(g):

Ensley is opposed to continuing county cooperation with federal immigration and customs enforcement agents. He believes it hinders public safety and runs counter to effective community building.

ON PRISONER VIDEO VISITS:

Although Ensley believes video visits can be useful for inmates who do not have family and friends nearby, he does not believe video visits meet the emotional needs of inmates and interrupts their transition back to the community.

ON INMATE SAFETY:

Ensley believes the jail must have appropriate practices in place to supervise and assess inmates as they enter confinement. Medical staff, social workers and jail detention staff must share the common goal of inmate safety. He also believes policies and practices will need to be reviewed after taking office.

ON JAIL STAFF SAFETY:

Ensley believes the jail is understaffed and lacks the resources to ensure optimal performance, efficiency and safety in the facility.

OTHER ISSUES:

Ensley lists of opening contract bidding processes to encourage minority and women-owned businesses to competition, the quality of jail food in detention and the unique needs of women inmates.

1. **Name:** Antoine M. Ensley Sr.
2. **Age:** 48
3. **Party Affiliation:** Democrat
4. **Political background or other civic engagement endeavors:** Sought the office of Sheriff in 2010, 2014 and persist even now to provide the progressive leadership that is needed within the County. Also, I was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to serve three prior years on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council of Mecklenburg County.

5. **What are your qualifications for this office?** My qualifications are broad. I leverage more than twenty years of administrative and management and leaders experience. I bring fourteen years of progressive law enforcement background serving CMPD as a Senior Police Officer, Police Training Officer, Swat Team Negotiator, Investigator, and Supervisor-Shift Commander. In addition, I served nearly two years as Chief of Police in Fletcher, NC. I broadened my career and spent four years in Norfolk, Virginia as the Superintendent of Juvenile Justice Programs. I currently develop workforce planning solutions for the City of Charlotte as a Human Resources Program Manager. Some of my work with the team includes partnering across eighteen departments in government to establish recruitment strategies, apprenticeships and a second chance culture. I have a BS, MBA and also graduate of the distinguished FBI National Academy and the UNC Chapel Hill School of Government MCA Program.
6. **The Mecklenburg County Sheriff's office has cooperated with federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents (287(g)) for more than twelve years. Why or why not should that cooperation continue?** The 287g program was a bad Idea in 2006 and remains a very bad public policy. The policy is extremely bad for immigrant families within our community by disrupting the essential family core. It hinders effective public safety and community relationships. The program is a poor use of taxpayers' financial resources that can be better used for impactful community-based programs. Finally, the program is not essential to the core protections of the community. Most law enforcement agencies across the United States would agree the policy runs counter to effective community building.
7. **What are the advantages and disadvantages of limiting inmate family visits to video visits? What is your stand on such visits?** The advantages of video visitation as it called is limited in that It can serve as a viable tool only in situations when a detainee may not have a local network of family and friends to visit. Otherwise, video visitation proves antithetical to meeting the human condition and emotional needs of detained individuals. Video visitation disrupts an effective transition plan for those returning to the community. Fundamentally, persons in confinement need appropriate visitation from friends and family to satisfy an emotional need that supports positive behaviors. I intend to build a more appropriate in person visitation model that is consistent with meeting the human condition.
8. **What can be done to reduce inmate deaths in county jails? What policies and safeguards are in place in Mecklenburg jails to ensure inmate health?** The death of a detainee is unfortunate and often avoidable. The most effective way to reduce or prevent deaths in county jail is to have appropriate policies and practices that ensures property supervision and risk mitigations for those exhibiting suicidal ideation. This must first be met with an effective risk assessment and screening of all individuals coming into confinement. Those exhibiting risks factors should be cared for and supervised consistent with policy, practices and strict accountability. The approach must ensure medical, clinical social worker and detention staff members share a common goal of safety and care for those within the detention facility. I suspect that policies and safeguards will require a thorough examination considering the safety concerns and at least one suicide that has occurred within the Mecklenburg County Detention Center.
9. **Do you believe the Mecklenburg Sheriff's department has sufficient resources to ensure jail staff safety?** I do not believe the MCSO has sufficient staff to ensure

optimal performance, efficiency and safety within the facilities. This is largely due to the ineffective leadership and overall lack of preparedness and experience of the current Sheriff. An example of this is when the Sheriff returned nearly ten million back to the general fund and called it efficiency yet the agency is understaffed.

10. **What other issues do you believe the County Sheriff should address?** The County Sheriff should address a host of concerns such as lack of proper bidding for substantive contracts to allow minority and woman owned businesses to properly compete for procurement opportunities. The Sheriff should address the quality of food in detention and the burden on poor families trying to support their detained loved ones. The sheriff should address the unique needs of woman as a growing population of people targeted for inappropriate detention. The Sheriff should address the lack of progressive ideas and thought leadership about the future of public safety in the County. The Sheriff should engage juvenile justice reform. I plan to address these issues and more as the next Sheriff should the citizens provide me the opportunity to lead in this role.