

Atchison Co sheriff's candidates trade jabs during debate

(KAIR)--The Atchison County Sheriff's Debate proved to be highly contentious Wednesday evening, with both candidates trading accusations and personal attacks.

The debate, which was broadcast live on KAIR 93.7, pitted the incumbent, Republican Sheriff Jack Laurie, against Democratic challenger and former Sheriff John Calhoon, who held the office for more than a decade before being ousted by Laurie in 2012.

The punches started early, with Calhoon throwing the first jab, when, during his opening statement, he accused Laurie of eroding the relationships with other local agencies, and abusing his power as sheriff.

"I found that the sheriff has completely eroded the relationships with other agencies, such as the city police department, city fire, rural fire departments, and other surrounding public agencies. Not only that, but he has been accused of abusing his authority by reading another agency's emails. He would like you to believe that this was a one-time thing, but it was nearly a daily ritual for him."

Fiscal responsibility was brought up numerous times by both candidates, with each accusing the other of not making good use of taxpayer money in the various leadership roles that they've held.

Sheriff Laurie saved his sharpest attack for the end, when he criticized Calhoon's performance during his tenure as sheriff.

"Officer safety was never, never an issue since I've taken office. I've taken care of my officers, provided them with the proper equipment. In fact, when I started at the sheriff's office and went to sheriff's school with a deputy, I learned that there was a deputy that started at the sheriff's office who wasn't even issued a gun or a vest, and was told to go out and train as a deputy out on the streets. That is not leadership material."

Wednesday evening's debate featured questions submitted by Atchison County residents and was moderated by Steve Johnson, the Director of Marketing and Communications at Benedictine College.

You can listen to the entire debate by clicking the link below.

[Atchison County Sheriff's Debate](#)

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