VOTING IN THE GENERAL ELECTION

New photo ID requirements for Texas voters
A court order issued on Aug. 10, relating to photo identification requirements for Texas voters has changed the rules. With this court order, Texas voters have additional options when presenting ID at the polls for the Nov. 8 election. As provided by court order, if a voter is not able to obtain one of the seven forms of approved photo ID, the voter may vote by (1) signing a declaration at the polls explaining why the voter is unable to obtain one of the seven forms of approved photo ID, and (2) providing one of various forms of supporting documentation.

Seven approved forms of photo ID:
- With the exception of the U.S. citizenship certificate, the approved photo ID must be current or have expired no more than four years before being presented for voter qualification at the polling place. The accepted forms of ID are:
  - Texas Driver License issued by Texas Department of Public Safety
  - Texas Election Identification Certificate (EIC) issued by DPS.
  - Texas Personal Identification Card issued by DPS.
  - Texas License to Carry a Handgun (LTC) issued by DPS.
  - U.S. military ID card containing the person's photograph.
  - U.S. citizenship certificate containing the person's photograph.
  - U.S. passport.

Supporting documents can be:
- Valid voter registration certificate.
- Certified birth certificate (must be an original).
- Copy of or original current utility bill.
- Copy of or original bank statement.
- Copy of or original government check.
- Copy of or original paycheck.
- Copy of or original government document with your name and an address (original required if it contains a photograph).

If a voter meets these requirements and is eligible to vote, the voter will be able to cast a regular ballot in the election. If the voter has no ID from those listed, he or she can vote on a provisional ballot and cure it with one of the approved IDs up to 6 calendar days after Election Day. The voter must appear at the Voter Registrar’s Office in person to cure the ballot on regular business days during normal business hours.

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- Anita Privett
- Joanne Richards
- Martha Rogers
- Gwendolyn Santiago
- Charlotte Slack
- Sally Wittliff
- Ruth Yanoff
President of the United States

Donald Trump (R)
Campaign website: www.donaldtrump.com

Answer 1: I’m running for President to make a difference in the lives of all Americans. I’ll build an economy that works for everyone, continue my fight for children and families, and work to keep our country safe. And I’ll unite Americans to take on all the challenges we face — because we’re stronger together.

Answer 2: 1. Grow and strengthen our economy. 2. Curb the outsized influence of big money in American politics. 3. Ensure we have the partnerships to keep our country safe.

Answer 3: My first priority will be to grow and strengthen our economy. I will invest in good-paying jobs, expand access to higher education, encourage companies to follow policies that put families first, and fight so that everyone pays their fair share. Every American deserves a good job, a successful career, and a productive life. Together, these efforts will work to make that a reality.

Answer 4: In my first 100 days, I will introduce comprehensive immigration reform with a path to citizenship. An estimated nine million lawful permanent residents are eligible to become U.S. citizens. As President, I will work to expand fee waivers and enhance outreach, so that more of the working poor can assume the full rights and responsibilities of becoming U.S. citizens.

Answer 5: Every child deserves a high-quality education. I will double our investments in Early Head Start programs and ensure every 4-year-old has access to high-quality preschool. I will do more to support our teachers, modernize our classrooms, and support STEM programs so that all public school students can learn computer science. We must give children the foundation to succeed, from pre-K to grade 12.

Answer 6: The U.S. needs to exercise leadership and shape global events rather than be shaped by them. So many of our interests — our security, our economy, and our fight against climate change — require cooperation with our friends and allies, and with countries we may agree with on some things, and disagree with on others. As President, I’ll ensure our country remains a source of leadership around the world.

Answer 7: Too many Americans still face discrimination and mistreatment. I will fight to break down barriers and build ladders of opportunity. We will reform our criminal justice system, protect transgender individuals, defend voting rights, fight environmental injustice, fight for comprehensive immigration reform, end the epidemic of gun violence, and ensure the citizens of Puerto Rico are treated equally.

Gary Johnson (L)
Campaign website: www.johnsonweld.com

Answer 1: I am Governor Gary Johnson and along with my running mate Governor William Weld we are honored to accept the invitation of the League of Women Voters to participate in their efforts to inform the voting American public of all options available to them during this Presidential election year.

Answer 2: Provide Congress a balanced budget within the first 100 days of office; Reduce (and in some cases eliminate) our military footprint abroad; Liberalize trade and economic activity.

Answer 3: Submit to Congress a balanced budget to provide a template to stop unsustainable growth of the national debt, debt that weighs on employers, entrepreneurs and the economy. Support a simpler, fairer tax code that won’t penalize productivity or investment. Fight to provide certainty in spending, taxes, and regulation so employers, entrepreneurs and investors make decisions that put people to work.

Answer 4: Ensure a pathway to citizenship for deserving immigrants by first establishing a way for non-criminal undocumented immigrants to achieve documented status. After that crucial first step, the pathway to citizenship will be the same as it is for all immigrants. No cutting the line. No unfair advantages. Just a legal status that allows immigrants to pursue the traditional path to becoming a citizen.

Answer 5: Education works best when decentralized. Since President Carter created the Dept. of Education, test scores have stagnated despite any new initiatives.

Hillary Clinton (D)
Campaign website: www.hillaryclinton.com

Answer 1: I’m running for President to make a difference in the lives of all Americans. I’ll build an economy that works for everyone, continue my fight for children and families, and work to keep our country safe. And I’ll unite Americans to take on all the challenges we face — because we’re stronger together.

Answer 2: 1. Grow and strengthen our economy. 2. Curb the outsized influence of big money in American politics. 3. Ensure we have the partnerships to keep our country safe.

Answer 3: My first priority will be to grow and strengthen our economy. I will invest in good-paying jobs, expand access to higher education, encourage companies to follow policies that put families first, and fight so that everyone pays their fair share. Every American deserves a good job, a successful career, and a productive life. Together, these efforts will work to make that a reality.

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President of the United States

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or spending programs. Parents and teachers make the best decisions for students, not bureaucrats at the DoE. Education is traditionally a state and local responsibility, and should remain so for innovation, best practices and even competition.

Answer 6: Above all, we must maintain a national defense that is second to none. Government’s first responsibility is to protect us from threats abroad. If attacked, we respond. Our greatest assets are economy and culture. Blue jeans and computers did more to win the Cold War than stockpiled warheads. I will pursue vigorous diplomacy based on our economic might, not idle threats and military interventions.

Answer 7: I would do everything in the Presidency’s power to end the militarization of the police. I would end the failed drug war, which unfairly targets communities of color. I would use the powers of the Federal Government to protect the civil liberties of all Americans, aggressively enforcing 14th Amendment protections. I would continue the work to help all Americans to achieve equality of opportunity.

Jill Stein (G)
Campaign website: jill2016.com

Answer 1: After a career in clinical medicine, I am now practicing political medicine, running for President to help heal our ailing nation. Your vote for me sends a clear signal that you want a new, principled politics that puts people, planet and peace over profit.

Answer 2: Green job-creation to fight climate change. 2. A fair economy that eliminates unemployment. 3. Justice, true democracy, and respect for all human beings.

Answer 3: Eliminate unemployment by creating a job for every American who needs work; Repeal NAFTA and other trade agreements that export our jobs overseas and create immigration surges; Create 20 million green jobs to stimulate the economy improving our health by cleaning up our land, air, and water; Protect consumers and small businesses from big banks and Wall Street predators.

Answer 4: First, end the massive deportation schemes that have torn families apart. I would also end the so-called Secure Communities program that has led to abuse of both citizens and non-citizens. End the misguided free trade agreements and regime change wars that have forced people to emigrate for their own survival. Finally, provide a welcoming and legal path to citizenship for current immigrants.

Answer 5: 1) Protect our public schools from privatization schemes that will inevitably undermine the American dream of quality public education for all. 2) Increase federal funding of public schools to make sure all school districts have the financial resources they need to provide quality education. 3) Ensure that kids come to school ready to learn: healthy, nourished, and secure.

Answer 6: Forge a new foreign policy based solidly on diplomacy, international law, respect for human rights, and consistent nonviolent support for democratic movements around the world. End the misguided policies of militarism that have produced terrorist organizations, refugee crises, failed states, and a bloated military that we can no longer afford.

Answer 7: My plan to end unemployment will transform the economic life of low income communities that are now struggling with unemployment rates two or three times the national average. Coupled with my commitment to quality public schools and community empowerment, we can not just lessen racial disparity, but bring it to an end.

U.S. Congressional races

Question 1: An estimated 300,000 people died from gun violence between 2004 and 2014. The number of deaths has multiplied exponentially in the past two years. Do you support a federal ban on assault weapons and do you support limits on firearms purchases by someone who is or has been under suspicion of terrorist activities? Why or why not?

Question 2: What role should the federal government play in education and what federal education policies do you support or oppose? Include policies concerning student debt, cost of higher education, and public school financing.

Question 3: Explain your support or opposition to comprehensive immigration reform. What role should the U.S. play in accepting refugees?

Question 4: Some 30 million Americans remain without health insurance. Explain why you would support or oppose changes to the entire piece of legislation that is commonly referred to as the Affordable Care Act.

Question 5: With the Middle East and other countries in turmoil, what should be America’s role in foreign policy?

Question 6: What other issues do you consider urgent that need congressional action in the next two years?

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 10

Michael T. McCaul (R)

Background: Former Deputy Attorney General
Education: B.A. Trinity University J.D. St. Mary’s University
Campaign website: www.michaelmccaul.com

Answer 1: I oppose a federal ban on such firearms. I support the 2nd amendment right to keep and bear arms, and I believe that citizens should be able to exercise those rights free of intrusive federal government intrusions. Millions of law-abiding Americans use guns for sports, target practice, and self-defense. I do not seek to limit their constitutional rights.

Answer 2: I believe that education is best handled at the most local level. The federal government in Washington should not impose a one size fits all system that ignores local knowledge and experience about what is best for our communities. I believe in innovation, the expansion of charter schools, education savings accounts, homeschooling, and opportunities for private school, especially for those most in need. Competition and choice make our public schools better, and improve outcomes for all children, as many studies have shown.

Answer 3: On immigration, it’s clear to me that we must secure the border first. We need to ensure that we end the flow of illegal immigrants, drug traffickers and potentially terrorists. Once we do that, we can talk about how best to fix the immigration system. But I am 100% opposed to amnesty for illegal immigrants. We are a nation of immigrants who have done it the right way, and that’s what we should expect of everyone. In terms of refugees, this country should be a place that welcomes vetted refugees who are fleeing political oppression and war. But we have to be very careful about who we bring in.

Answer 4: I have voted many times to repeal and replace ObamaCare. This federal takeover of our health care system has been a complete disaster. Every few weeks we see new headlines about how the system is failing apart. President Obama promised us that we could keep our doctor, and that prices would decline. Neither of those things was true. We have seen health insurance rates skyrocket under ObamaCare, and the major companies are pulling out of the exchanges. I support a free market, patient-centered health care system that doesn’t put a bureaucrat between a patient and his or her doctor.

Answer 5: Our country needs to project strength around the world again. I believe that we are an exceptional nation, not only because of our unique system of government, but because we have tried to maximize freedom and democracy around the world. No other nation on the planet is so inclusive of morality and values in its foreign policy. We do not just act in our national self-interest, but in the interest of humanity and the world community. We should continue in this tradition by making the world a safer and better place through diplomacy, intelligence sharing, and sometimes military action.

Answer 6: Congress needs to tackle our $20 trillion in debt and trillions more in unfunded liabilities. The only way to do this is by passing a strong balanced budget amendment to the constitution and reforming entitlement spending. Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid are going bankrupt, unless we make some big changes. We need to be bold and take these issues head on. Our country is heading toward a fiscal cliff of our own making, and we simply cannot continue to borrow and print money.

Tawana W. Cadien (D)

Background: Tawana W. Cadien is a dedicated community leader that has consistently had a positive impact as both a Public Administrator and RN Educator.

Education: Executive Masters in Public Administration-Texas Southern University Bachelors of Science in Nursing-Prairie View A&M University

Campaign website: www.tawanacadienforcongress.com

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Answer 1: Safety and security for all Americans is paramount. I support the Second Amendment and responsible gun ownership. The misuse of assault weapons, however, has been the source of great tragedy for Americans. Children in their kindergarten classrooms and so many others across this country have left this earth too soon with an assault weapon being their last visual. Assault weapons were not designed for civilian use and must be banned. American citizens must also be allowed to exercise their Second Amendment right to bear arms. Suspected terrorists should definitely have limited firearm access.

Answer 2: The federal government, though limited, must be intentionally involved with the education system. Children living with disabilities, whether physical or mental, deserve to have appropriate educational support. Disabled children are often a part of a lackadaisical and incoherent educational policy, leaving them unable to advance to their fullest potential. This is frustrating for the student, family, and educators that feel unsupported. I support IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act) and will advocate for additional bills that offer more protection for disabled children and their families.

Answer 3: We certainly need immigration reform in order to ensure the safety and security of our borders. However, our compassion and fairness for refugees are a source of great pride for the U.S. These values are at the core of our domestic policy. Refugees are people who have fled their country because of a well-founded fear of persecution, and who are therefore unable to return home. Many refugees come from war-torn countries and have experienced unthinkable horrors. The role of the U.S. accepting refugees must be limited with allowance for a vetting process, while ensuring safety for citizens.

Answer 4: The number of Americans living without health insurance is catastrophic. Each startling numerical statistic reflects a real human life. Texans led the nation in uninsured citizens while many of their representatives in office have not only never produced a healthcare bill, but continually voted against The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). Countless positive testimonials of grateful citizens have been accounted for. I support improving the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Countless representatives in office have not only never produced a healthcare bill, but continually support. Disabled children are often a part of a lackadaisical and incoherent educational policy, leaving them unable to advance to their fullest potential. This is frustrating for the student, family, and educators that feel unsupported. I support IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act) and will advocate for additional bills that offer more protection for disabled children and their families.

Answer 5: I am a well-funded fear of persecution, and who are therefore unable to return home. Many refugees come from war-torn countries and have experienced unthinkable horrors. The role of the U.S. accepting refugees must be limited with allowance for a vetting process, while ensuring safety for citizens.

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Bill Kelsey (L)
Background: past twenty years flew in Africa and Asia as a bush pilot, mostly in humanitarian missions in war zones, occasional oil industry operations; Education: US Naval Academy; many aviation programs; self educated in several languages; Campaign website: kelseyforcongress.com

Answer 1: Many more than 300,000 people died from gun violence. I focus on the military industrial complex and the international weapons trade. The largest, most dangerous, and most destructive weapons are those in the hands of the US Federal government. I am an eyewitness to the havoc played by the use of these weapons in the wars abroad and must bear witness. I will do everything in my power to work against this phenomenon. Meanwhile I will not collude with the coercive power of government should it engage in potentially violent confiscation of guns from peaceful citizens.

Answer 2: I favor a gradual and responsible transformation of society away from dependence on the Federal government in all matters, including education.

Answer 3: I welcome immigrants. We must simplify the current visa application process which is a bureaucratic nightmare. At the same time immigrants should not become dependent on government support. Formative years of my life, including my early childcare, were in the company of refugees from ethnic cleansing and genocide. I am very sensitive to the plight of those who have fled war zones. I personally support voluntary refugee resettlement efforts in Austin. We especially must take responsibility for refugees fleeing wars which our government has fueled with its weapons sales.

Answer 4: In an enlightened society health care will be available to all through free market practices, private philanthropy, and community based safety nets. We must find and make ways to avoid becoming dependent on the Federal Government for our health. The "Affordable Care" system, which combines the worst elements of government interventionism, the insurance industry, and the pharmaceutical industry has produced a bewildering labyrinth which is a challenge for the elderly to navigate. Government involvement in health care should be rare, simple, and as a last resort.

Answer 5: America’s role should be free trade with all and entangling alliances with none. I will call for an end to compulsory tax payer aid to foreign states, a withdrawal from military alliances, a withdrawal of US forces from abroad, closure of bases abroad, and a disengagement from all wars - known and unknown, with no exceptions for traditional “allies.” The government lacks both the ability and the right to choose friends and enemies for its citizens, much less compel its citizens to support the chosen friends against the chosen enemies. The interventions have been disasters for all concerned.

Answer 6: The income tax system is a degrading insult to self-respecting citizens of this nation. My goal as a libertarian will be its gradual and responsible abolition. Such an income taxation system as might remain during a transition period must not be used to manipulate behavior through “tax incentives.” We must also ban use of the system to punish or reward citizens for their personal beliefs or political activities. During the transition to eventual abolition, no citizen should be compelled to contribute to any government program which is in violation of the citizen’s conscience.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 17

Bill Flores (R)
Background: After thirty years of energy industry leadership experience, I retired in 2009 to run for Congress in order to bring a business mindset to Washington.

Education: BBA—Accounting from Texas A&M University (cum laude); Texas Certified Public Accountant (CPA); MBA from Houston Baptist University

Campaign website: BillFlores.com
Answer 1: I strongly support the 2nd Amendment rights of Americans. Current law prevents the sale of weapons to foreign persons and/or to persons adjudicated to be involved in terrorist activities; current law also prevents the sale automatic (“assault”) weapons. One of the best actions that Congress can take to deal with violence (including gun violence) is to address mental health challenges in a manner similar to the Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2016 (H.R. 2646), which passed the U.S. House of Representatives in July 2016 with a bipartisan vote of 422-2.

Answer 2: Under our Constitution, Education is a state & local responsibility and federal involvement in education over the past few decades has led to poorer educational outcomes and higher costs. For example, there are 45 separate federal programs dedicated to early childhood, including a dozen just for education. Each program has its own set of rules and regulations. The programs overlap with each other, and can’t be matched up with the needs of local communities. We need to reduce federal interference in education and provide federal funding to state & local governments in the form of block grants.

Answer 3: The surge of illegal immigrants across our borders represents a call to action. As a nation of laws, we must insist that everyone come here legally and maintain legal status. A porous border puts our communities and our nation at risk. America must secure the border by accelerating the deployment of fencing, technology, air assets, and personnel. We must also protect our country and promote fairness by enforcing our immigration laws. Our “legal” immigration system needs to be updated to reflect the labor needs of a 21st century economy. Refugee programs should include robust security vetting.

Answer 4: Americans deserve an accessible and affordable health care system that promotes quality care and peace of mind. Obamacare has failed. America’s healthcare system should be reformed based upon five principles that empower patients and spur competition—(1) Repeal Obamacare, (2) Provide all Americans with more choices, lower costs, and greater flexibility, (3) Protect our nation’s most vulnerable (particularly those with pre-existing conditions), (4) Spur innovation in health care as proposed in the House passed the 21st Century Cures Act (H.R. 6), and (5) Protect and preserve Medicare.

Answer 5: There is a better way to keep American families safe. We must do whatever is necessary to protect our homeland from terror and we must take the fight to the enemy. We should build a

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U.S. Congressional races

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clear strategy to defeat radical Islamists by renewing our relationships with moderate Middle Eastern countries like Jordan & Israel, based upon our mutual interests. We should be an influence for liberty and free enterprise around the world. We must make sure our men and women have what they need to tackle the threats of our time and beyond. A confident America keeps the peace, and keeps its people safe and free.

Answer 6: I strongly support and helped coauthor “A Better Way” agenda for a confident America which was recently released by conservatives in the House of Representatives. Our agenda is built upon six objectives: (1) Restore our national security, (2) Reform our tax code to help our families and to make American businesses competitive, (3) Enact policies for renewed economic growth and opportunity to help hardworking American families, (4) Address our nation’s staggering poverty by introducing bold reforms, (5) Reform healthcare (see healthcare), and (6) Restore Congress’ Constitutional authorities.

William Matta (D)
Background: Retired Air Force colonel; university instructor/prof.,1983–2004; Division Chair, McLennan Community College, Waco, since 2004; married since 1982
Education: Ph.D., UT-Austin, Applied Linguistics; M.A. & B.A., U of North Dakota, English; B.A., Bemidji State College, Biology
Campaign website: www.billmatta.com
Answer 1: I support a federal ban on assault weapons and believe we should not allow individuals suspected of terrorist activities, convicted of violent crimes, or determined by medical authorities to be a danger to themselves or others to own firearms. The supposed dangers of reasonable gun laws to law-abiding gun owners’ rights is far outweighed by the real dangers to all of ineffective gun laws. I am a hunter, gun owner, and am retired military, but I believe we must demilitarize ourselves as civilians to become a civil society. We Americans are at war with ourselves. It’s time for a cease-fire!

Answer 2: Student loan debt has become a form of wage servitude and is bad for individuals and bad for our country. I advocate for free or reduced tuition for college and vocational training for students of families with low to moderate incomes and restructuring of the student loan program so students with existing loans can get some relief through loan forgiveness and reduced interest rates. We must not privatize public education; doing so has only led to school closures and increased socioeconomic segregation. Public funds must not go to private schools as vouchers or in any other form.

Answer 3: We need comprehensive immigration reform to fix the family visa backlog while protecting our borders and national security and bringing in workers necessary to the US economy. We must end family detention and private detention centers and defer deportation of childhood immigrants and parents of US citizens. Refugees seeking asylum must be fairly reviewed, just as those who pose a threat should be rejected, detained, and deported. All families, including immigrants, must be afforded healthcare. Keep paths to citizenship open.

Answer 4: Although the ACA has enabled many more people to get insurance, more reform of our healthcare system is needed to make healthcare affordable and available for all. People in many areas now have only one or two insurers to choose from, meaning those people already have a single-payer system—but with the insurance companies serving as the middlemen. As businesses, those companies exist primarily to make a profit and only secondarily to provide healthcare. Maybe it’s time to do what nearly all other countries do and let our government manage this most essential human service.

Answer 5: The Middle East remains a hotspot, and we must stay diplomatically engaged. In general, the US should continue to offer aid and assistance around the world whenever possible; however, the use of US military force should be limited to defending ourselves and our allies and to humanitarian crises, and it should always be aligned with our allies and legitimate governments. We should not seek regime change, nor should we interfere with the evolution of democratic governments. Education, trade, and sustainable economic development are all critically important areas in which we should help others.

Answer 6: Stop climate change now, mainly by investing in renewable energy wherever possible. Create jobs and reboot the economy by rebuilding roads, bridges, and other critical infrastructure. Revise the tax system so the 1% pay their fair share, which would finance necessary programs while reducing corporate welfare and political influence. Focus on the family with paid vacation, sick leave, family leave, and childcare. Change drug laws so addiction is treated as a medical problem, not a criminal one. End privatization of prisons, the military, and other areas that do not require profits to justify.

Clark Patterson (L)
Background: Congressional Candidate [Texas CD 1] -- 2012 Texas State House Candidate [District 48] -- 1982
Education: BA University of Texas - Austin [1988]
Campaign website: www.clarkforcongress.com
Answer 1: Libertarians emphatically oppose federal bans on guns and assault weapons. Over the last 40 years, the murder rate and the number of people who have died from gun violence in the US has fallen dramatically. During this same period, the number of guns purchased in the US has risen sharply. Libertarians believe in maximizing freedom and believe in a presumption of innocence for all persons. Those persons most concerned with the threat of domestic terrorism should be the last to support bans on the sale or possession of firearms. The US should not attempt to protect rights by restricting rights.

Answer 2: Libertarians believe that government — whether federal, state, or local — shouldn’t have any role at all in primary, secondary, or higher education. Libertarians vehemently oppose state compulsory education laws that force parents to enroll their children in school. Children are highly unique; not all are meant for formal schooling. Many children are “square pegs” forced to fit into the “round hole” of mass compulsory public education. Also, all federal and state government funding of higher education should be phased out. Higher education is not a public good nor is it a right.

Answer 3: I ardently support comprehensive immigration reform based on greatly increasing legal levels of immigration. In a 2012 Gallup poll, roughly 150 million foreigners expressed a desire to immigrate to the US. With some procedural vetting, we should allow the vast majority to do so. Contrary to the current conventional wisdom, immigration is a win-win proposition. Immigrants benefit from moving to the US, but do so natives. Consequently, we should legalize the current 11.2 million undocumented workers and grant them a pathway to citizenship. We should also allow in many more political refugees.

Answer 4: The Affordable Care Act should be phased out. We should also phase out Medicare and Medicaid within one to two generations [25–50 years]. Libertarians believe there should be no governmental involvement in health care. Unfortunately, too many Americans today believe that health care is a right. It is not. Removing all levels of government from health care would, in the long run, greatly reduce overall health care spending. In a complete free market in health care, Americans would pay almost all of their health care costs “out of pocket.” Insurance would likely only pay for health emergencies.

Answer 5: The US is the most existentially secure nation in world history. We share a border with two close allies. Today, American culture is globally ascendant and there are more free governments today than at any other time in world history. Within a hundred years or so, the entire world will speak only English. “Building a wall” around the US will only retard these positive developments. The US should pursue complete free trade and greatly increase the level of legal immigration. Finally, the US should immediately implement a foreign policy of strict non-interventionism and close all overseas bases.

Answer 6: The US federal government currently has a $19 trillion debt and unfunded liabilities of $127 trillion. In order to avoid economic catastrophe resulting from these debts, Congress must immediately begin making massive, across-the-board cuts in government spending and severely reducing the size and scope of the federal government. Two specific areas should be emphasized. First, the US should phase out over the next 25–50 years, all entitlement programs — including Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid. And second, the US should immediately switch to a foreign policy of strict non-interventionism.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 21

Lamar Smith (R)
Education: Yale University, B.A. Southern Methodist University, J.D.
Campaign website: www.texansforlamar smith.com
Answer 1: A ban on assault weapons was enacted during the Clinton administration and proved ineffective. Many individuals have wrongly been placed on the “terrorist watch list.” It would be unconstitutional to restrict the ability of someone to own firearms without due process and an opportunity to show they have no connection to terrorist organizations. If they do have such a connection, under current law they can be prohibited from purchasing weapons.

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Answer 2: Ninety percent of education funding comes from local and state governments. Most decisions should be made by local school districts, not the federal government. One area where the federal government can be helpful is with STEM education. Last year, I introduced the STEM Education Act, which was signed into law. This legislation expands the definition of STEM education to include computer science and provides funds for teacher training and STEM scholarships. I support charter schools, school choice and greater transparency regarding school loans.

Answer 3: I am opposed to mass amnesty for illegal immigrants, which would encourage more illegal immigration at the expense of taxpayers and American workers. We should only accept refugees who meet the legal definition of refugee, which is often ignored by the Obama administration. Refugees from terrorist-sponsoring countries should not be admitted unless a background check can be completed showing they are not a threat.

Answer 4: Obamacare is unpopular, unworkable and unaffordable and Americans have seen their premiums and deductibles rise as a result of it. I would like to replace Obamacare with common-sense solutions that lower health care costs, expand access to care and eliminate unfair mandates and penalties. Specifically, I support legislation that allows families and individuals to deduct health care costs, just like companies, and provides all Americans with a standard deduction for health insurance.

Answer 5: Our top priority must be to ensure national security. The U.S. must use every possible means to combat terrorism. As a member of the House Homeland Security Committee, I work with the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency in an effort to protect the American people from further attacks. We must return to a policy focused on the safety of the United States rather than promoting policies that reward our enemies and undermine our friends.

Answer 6: Congress needs to address several issues to get our country back on the path to economic prosperity. First, we must reduce the deficit and achieve a balanced budget. That will increase economic growth and create jobs. Just as every household must set a budget, so must the federal government. Second, we must eliminate unnecessary and costly regulations that stifle investment and economic growth. Finally, we must enforce our current immigration laws and secure the borders, which will benefit American workers and taxpayers.

Tom Wakely (D)

Background: Though I was elected to the Lake Geneva Wisconsin High School School Board over 20 yrs. ago, I am not a politician. I am a hospice caregiver.

Education: Alamo Heights High School Loretto Heights College Chicago Theological Seminary

Campaign website: wakely2016.com

Answer 1: I support limits on firearms purchases for people who are under suspicion of terrorist activities. While this is certainly not a catch-all solution to our firearms crisis, and while I understand the need for oversight as to who gets put on a terrorist watch list, I think this is a good start to keep dangerous weapons out of dangerous hands. We are expected to lead the world in so many arenas, but not in homicides by firearms.

Answer 2: I'm a firm believer in making public institutions tuition-free for all, but I'm well aware of the lengthy steps necessary to get us to that point. Most public institutions are under their state's jurisdiction. Drafting and passing legislation which allows the revenue collected at a federal level and subsequently redistributed to the 50 states will be an extremely lengthy process. In the interim, I do think some ground can be made in expanding the Pell Grant program to cover a greater percentage of our educational costs.

Answer 3: I support comprehensive immigration reform. We cannot turn a blind eye to the folks already living within our borders. There must be a clear path to citizenship. In supporting comprehensive immigration reform, and supporting the idea that the U.S. is the greatest experiment and cultural melting pot, we should be a leader in accepting refugees.

Answer 4: When a group of people are in need, America must be ready to walk the walk when it comes to the basic thought of compassion.

Answer 5: In all foreign matters, I think we should first look to the State Department before we settle with a plan through the Department of Defense. We should always seek diplomatic solutions before engaging in international conflicts. I’m a firm believer that America does not need to spread its democracy abroad through violence or military force in order to be a leader on this planet.

Answer 6: Campaign finance reform is paramount to our progress. We must work to overturn the Citizens United decision. We need greater involvement from the federal government to ensure the quality and availability of clean drinking water. for every man, woman, and child.

Mark Loewe (L)

Background: I coauthored a quantum mechanics textbook, taught physics at UT and Texas State U, wrote Texas House Bill 2959 (2009), and do microelectronics R&D.

Education: PhD Physics, U Texas, Austin. BS Chemistry and BS Physics, Magna Cum Laude, U California, Irvine. Fulbright Kommission support for research, Germany.

Campaign website: www.markloewe.org

Answer 1: I oppose attempts to vest in Congress any power that invites tyranny and puts liberty at risk, such as power to ban gun ownership by citizens without due process of law. Vigilant, well armed and trained citizens, local police, state forces, and federal forces are, in descending order, important defenses against aggression and tyranny by individuals, organizations, and governments. A gun ownership ban invites aggression and tyranny by individuals, organizations, and governments. Our federal forces, aided by state forces, local police, and citizens must be strong enough to defeat all aggressors.

Answer 2: Our Constitution rightly vests in Congress power to promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts and rightly does not vest power to pay for education, except as necessary and proper to execute vested powers. To attract tens of billions of additional private dollars per year into K-12 education and to empower parents, especially poor parents, to reject mediocre schools and choose safe schools that better serve their children’s individual needs, abilities, and interests, states should enable voters in school districts to adopt school choice plans similar to a plan that I devised long ago.

Answer 3: Immigrants, including refugees, should be carefully vetted for dangerous communicable diseases, criminality, inability to support themselves, opposition to the rule of law under our Constitution, and other things that may harm or burden Americans. Congress should not automatically give citizenship to children born to aliens passing through the USA. Congress should remove from jurisdiction of federal courts cases in which illegal aliens not in custody demand giveaways of money, food, shelter, non-emergency medical care, transportation, education, or privileges to vote, work, or stay in the USA.

Answer 4: Our Constitution does not vest in Congress power to require people to buy anything, including insurance, or to pass a bill for raising revenue that does not originate in the House of Representatives. For these and other reasons, the ACA is unconstitutional. Medical, drug, and insurance cartels want government, by force, to limit competition in cartel favor despite fewer choices, higher costs, and lower quality of service for the public. Some government officials who want power or bribes also want government, by force, to limit competition. I oppose attempts to vest in Congress such powers.

Answer 5: We should promote conditions worldwide under which Americans can safely and fairly compete to buy and sell goods and services, promote benefits of individual liberty, goodwill, tolerance, and non-aggression, offer disaster aid, condemn tyranny, punish piracy, and defeat aggressors against us or our treaty allies.

We should keep American troops in South Korea to deter North Korean attacks on our now prosperous and free long-time ally and to lower risks that a devastating Korean war will resume. We should urge Communist China to end its immensely dishonorable support of North Korean tyranny.

Answer 6: Congress can easily avoid and eliminate its give away of hundreds of billions of dollars per year of interest on federal debt, which harms most Americans, enriches creditors, and funds military buildups of some adversaries. Some electronic controls and power infrastructure need urgent hardening to reduce risks that tens of millions of Americans will die after an electromagnetic pulse (EMP). To limit lavish interpretation of laws when federal bureaucrats issue regulations, rules, and policies, Congress should direct bureaucrats to interpret laws to have as little effect as necessary and proper.

Antonio “Tony” Diaz (G)

Background: Medical, electronics and retail.


Answer 1: I support a more stringent border security law.

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our communities, creates more danger, injuries and death of innocent citizens.
Answer 2: I am in support of alleviating debt of higher education. I would expand the role of the federal government in education. I support the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) signed by President Obama of which Texas is a part of. I also support the Student Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) for higher education. I support to defer student loans and cancellation of student debt. I believe the federal government should subsidize higher education in order to give opportunities to lower income educationally qualified students.

Answer 3: I support the migration rights of indigenous people of this continent and as an activist and have said so in different forums and conferences. I believe its a human right to safe harbor refugees feeling natural disasters and violence of all kinds. vetting has become a requirement due to acts of terrorism but the U.S. should continue its role of accepting refugees.

Answer 4: As a Green Party candidate, I believe in expanding medicare and making it a universal health care program. The Affordable Care Act as it exists, still places the human right to safe harbor refugees feeling natural disasters and violence of all kinds. vetting has become a requirement due to acts of terrorism but the U.S. should continue its role of accepting refugees.

Answer 5: To stop the militarization of regions that are in turmoil. The U.S. and other developed nations that are major producers of military weapons should curtail the sale of these weapons simply for the sake of gain or profit.

Answer 6: The burning of fossil fuels, the emission of toxic waste in our air, water, and oil. Second issue would be education. The forgiveness or elimination of student debt. The expansion of medicare into a universal health care system. Sustaining affordable housing. And putting a ceiling cap on the corporate profits in order to maintain a lower cost of living.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 25

Roger Williams (R)
No response.

Kathi Thomas (D)

Background: Small business owner since 1990; Married, 1 daughter; active @ Central Presbyterian Church; active Hays County Democratic Party; DAR member

Education: Attended Sam Houston State University on full music scholarship; graduated University of Texas-Austin with Bachelor of Music degree

Campaign website: KathiForCongress.com

Answer 1: I support renewed federal ban on assault weapons and believe those who are under suspicion (now or in past) of terrorism should not be able to purchase weapons without thorough vetting. Assault weapons were made for war, for killing people. We don’t need more of these in personal ownership. I would support gun ranges being able to have a limited supply, available only for those over 21 to shoot at the range, and for licensed hog hunters to have them for clients on hunts.

Approx. 1/5 of gun deaths are suicide-need education about how to prevent easy access to guns at home.

Answer 2: Because democracy needs an educated populace to survive, it’s important that the federal government fund public education and higher education. Feds need to set minimum standards of public education, while encouraging & incentivizing states to have higher minimum standards, but no “high stakes” tests like in TX.

In higher education, I believe the fed. gov. needs to continue low interest loans to students. Students shouldn’t have to graduate owing huge interest rates to for-profit lenders - if so, they’re not likely to buy homes or participate in our consumer economy in any meaningful way.

Answer 3: I support CIR because it is the right thing to do morally & ethically, & is good for businesses, too. The US plays/ed a large part in the instability of our neighbors to the south, through support in the past for murderous dictators and our continuing “hunger” for illegal drugs. Because of this, we have a moral duty to accept people fleeing the violence of those countries.

Worldwide, the US needs to accept more well-vetted refugees (& while no one can guarantee that ANYONE won’t do something violent, the vetting is very strong now, esp. for refugees from the Middle East.) We can’t live in fear

Answer 4: I support improving the ACA with a phased-in “buy-in” to single payer/ Medicare, beginning at age 55, and dropping the age by 5 years each year, until everyone has the ability to buy in if they prefer. That gives Medicare time to ramp up to meet the new demand and gives insurance companies the time to refocus their businesses, so that it does not put a lot of good people who work in the insurance industry out of business. In my opinion, is immoral, as well as insanely expensive that we have so many without access to affordable healthcare. We all pay for uninsured healthcare at highest rates now

Answer 5: I believe we cannot have troops “on the ground” there, as it is a “recruiting tool” for extremists. I support helping our allies there with air support.

I would rather see us helping natives that do things like job training and education. If more people are educated, and have a good job, perhaps they wouldn’t turn to extremism so easily. Some see us as “invaders” and “against Islam”— thanks in part to rhetoric from the far right. This can’t be about religion. A political solution in Syria needs to be found. Pressure against those providing weapons could help, too. Cut off their money source.

Answer 6: Climate change is real and it is dangerous. Even in GOP-led Coral Gables, FL, the mayor is working to raise their roads, which are already flooding, something he attributes to climate change. We need to wean ourselves from fossil fuels, and move subsidies and tax breaks from that industry to renewables and thorium research.

We are such a small % of the world’s population, but we consume so much. We need to learn to live together with the world and not to take so much of everything.

Overtur Citizen’s United & get “dark money” out of politics. Citizens have right to know who is funding campaign

Loren Marc Schneiderman (L)

Background: Over 20 years in business including: education management, sales and marketing, public relations, creative services, media/broadcasting, and financial

Education: Associates of Arts/Journalism Bachelor of Science/Journalism Masters of Business Administration Professional licenses/certificates

Campaign website: www. lorenfortexas25th.com

Answer 1: The only legitimate use of force is in defense of individual rights against aggression. I affirm the individual right recognized by the Second Amendment to keep and bear arm. Private property owners should be free to establish their own conditions regarding the presence of personal defense weapons on their own property. I oppose all laws at any level of government restricting, registering, or monitoring the ownership, manufacture, or transfer of firearms or ammunition

Educated people make fair decisions. We are failing by creating a society of entitlement and fear. I want to protect us.

Answer 2: Education is best provided by the free market, achieving greater quality, accountability and efficiency with more diversity of choice. Recognizing that the education is a parental responsibility, we would restore authority to parents to determine the education of their children, without interference from government. Parents should have control of and responsibility for all funds expended for their children’s education. Education should be in the hands of a private free market leading to more options, better management and a system that has the student’s best interests - an effective balance.

Answer 3: American foreign policy should seek an America at peace with the world. Our foreign policy should emphasize defense against attack from abroad and any foreign entanglements. I would end the current U.S. government policy of foreign intervention, including military and economic aid. I recognize the right of all people to resist tyranny and defend themselves and their rights. Political freedom and escape from tyranny demand that individuals not be unreasonably constrained by government in the crossing of political boundaries. We must correct our current system and allow for safe immigration.

Answer 4: Planning is the responsibility of the individual, not the government. I would phase out the current government-sponsored health insurance system and transition to a private voluntary system. Society will become strengthened as government reduces its activity in this realm. I favor a free-market health care system, recognize the freedom of individuals to determine the level of health care they want, the care providers they want, the medicines and treatments they desire. Government cannot manage these systems well. A free market is fundamental to our success.

Answer 5: I seek a world of liberty; a world in which all individuals are sovereign over their lives and no one is forced to sacrifice his or her values for the benefit of others. I believe that respect for individuals is the essential precondition for a free and prosperous world, that force and fraud be banished from human relationships, and that through freedom can peace and prosperity be realized. I support the maintenance of a sufficient military to defend the United States against aggression. All wars could be cut-off from support entirely and therefore will wilt and slowly evolve towards peace.

Answer 6: We have earned the right to exercise dominion over our lives, and have the right to live in whatever manner we choose, so long as we do not forcibly interfere with the equal rights of others. Governments have regularly operated on the opposite principle, that the state has the right to dispose of the lives of individuals and the fruits of their labor. People should not be forced to sacrifice their lives and
property for the benefit of others. We should not be pawned as a commodity. Freedom leads to peace and prosperity. A free market, with free ideas, leads to a peaceful and prosperous life.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 27

Blake Farenthold (R)
Background: Attorney, Small Business Owner, Radio Talk Show Host, Member of Congress
Education: B.S in Radio Television Film from University of Texas, JD Saint Mary’s University School of Law
Campaign website: blake.com

Answer 1: I am a strong supporter of the right to bear arms. More regulations on firearms & ammunition will not reduce gun violence. Weapon bans will not prevent criminals from acquiring firearms. Rather than disarming law-abiding citizens, we need to enforce the laws already on the books. Preventing mentally unstable people from obtaining firearms is part of the problem as is punishing criminals who use guns. We also need to evaluate the effectiveness of gun-free zones and increased security in schools. Finally, we must support our law enforcement officers who risk their lives for us every day.

Answer 2: The federal government spends more on education than ever before. They have accomplished their mission that the role that the U.S. would play, would be to deport anyone with criminal records or if they were members of Cartels currently in the war, incase they need our support. We also should move more of our military bases overseas so the nation or nations fight against our Allies. We try to stop the Soviet Union/Russia from trying to intervene or use it’s influence with the nation or nations fight against our Allies. We also should move more of our military closer to our Allies countries that is involved in the war, incase they need our support.

Answer 3: There is no point changing immigration laws until the border is secure & existing laws enforced. The safety of Americans comes first and that means a pause in accepting refugees whose background we can’t check. Once security is addressed, immigration must compassionately meet the economic needs of America. Employers who hire & exploit undocumented workers must be punished, we need a mandatory e-verify system, must know who enters and exits the country, and structure the immigration system in a way it provides for economic growth and doesn’t take jobs away from hard working Americans.

Answer 4: The Affordable Care Act is neither affordable nor does it provide quality care. Individual mandates and poorly run state exchanges have caused premiums and deductibles to skyrocket and exchanges to fail. We need to put healthcare back in the hands of doctors and patients, not unelected bureaucrats. True health care reform includes supporting cutting edge cures and treatments. It should focus on bringing down costs with competition, wellness programs and lawsuit reform. Insurance should be tax deductible, portable, and available across state lines.

Answer 5: America must reclaim its rightful place as the world’s superpower and make national security our top priority. We need to stop leading from behind, step out front and show our enemies that we are strong. We must protect the homeland, secure the border, decisively defeat the terrorists, tackle new threats like cyber security, and continue to defend freedom and liberty. Security requires we rebuild our military and intelligence apparatus after 8 years of neglect.

Answer 6: We must fix our economy, create jobs and restore the American dream. This means getting rid of oppressive government regulations from unelected bureaucrats at an alphabet soup of federal agencies like the EPA, FDA, DOL, CFPB and dozens more. It also means a fairer, flatter and simpler tax code with lower taxes that encourage investment in the United States. We must also re-examine how we fight poverty by incentivizing those who can work to work, improving skills and demanding results. Our government should be honest, cost effective, efficient, accountable and transparent.

Raul “Roy” Barrera (D)
Background: Raul has worked over 35 plus years in Law Enforcement, He currently works as a Special Deputy/Court Security Officer at the Federal Court House.
Education: Robstown High School Del Mar College Police Academy Del Mar College Telecommunications
Campaign website: barreraforcongress@gmail.com

Answer 1: I support the ban on assault weapons. I also support limits on firearms purchases by someone who is or has been under suspicion of terrorist activities. Why, because these individuals have no feelings for life. They also believe that if they kill a bunch of people and then commit suicide in the name of their Afa or their superiors, they have accomplished their mission that they were assigned to do. They have a totally different way of thinking and going about in life. To them life is meaningless, they are not like us Americans that care about God and each other with good morals etc...

Answer 2: The federal government should make education more affordable for students. Policies concerning student debts, I support loans to students with a low, low interest rate. Cost of higher education should also be made more affordable. I also feel that the government should assist states, that are struggling economically and public schools are not getting the sufficient funds/monies to operate effectively. Because if the schools don’t have enough funds or grants, they would have to cut down or downsize in special programs for educating in the Elementary/Middle school and high schools as well.

Answer 3: I support comprehensive immigration reform. If I was a Congressman I would try and pass a Bill that would allow illegal alien families in American that have been here for more then 5 years and children born in the U.S.A., to obtain legal status in the country without fear of being deported, provided that they register with the Federal Government. Have them pay their fair share of taxes and obtain Social Security cards and get back ground checks. The role that the U.S. would play, would be to deport anyone with criminal records or if they were members of Cartels etc....

Answer 4: I would support changes to this Affordable Care Act, due to the fact that it is really unaffordable by many, many people. Affordable Care was specially designed for young kids and babies and not for the adult population. Many families with teenagers in their homes or married couples cannot afford this kind of insurance because it so expensive and gasoline and groceries prices keep going up higher and higher. It is impossible to afford health care insurance.

Answer 5: With all that is going on the Middle East, our role should be to try and defend and assist all of our ally countries and try to stop the Soviet Union/Russia from trying to intervene or use it’s influence with the nation or nations fight against our Allies. We also should move more of our military closer to our Allies countries that is involved in the war, incase they need our support.

Answer 6: Other issues that need the utmost attention is Our Veterans not getting the adequate treatment that they need. Social Security going dry, The Economy, Global warming and Cleaner water.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 31

John Carter (R)
No response.

Mike Clark (D)
Background: 2nd Vice Chair, Williamson County Democratic Party; Precinct Chair, Williamson County Democratic Party
Education: Master’s, Stephen F Austin; Bachelor’s, University of Texas
Campaign website: www.votemikeclark.com

Answer 1: Renewing the assault weapons ban is a common sense approach that many Americans want passed. The “no fly no buy” law is a simple and common sense piece of legislation that is crucial to protecting our citizens on airplanes. We all know how dangerous a gun can be. Safety, training, and enforcement are key parts of our national morals when it comes to gun ownership. Safety and training ensures that your spouse and children do not become another accidental shooting statistic. Enforcement means that criminals and terrorists cannot buy a gun the same way everyday law abiding citizens can.

Answer 2: Investing in early childhood education is a must. Developing good learning skills starts at an early age. Building these essential learning skills benefits our children for the rest of their lives. A funded and focused effort on Head Start and Early Head Start lays the foundation for them to pursue interests in science, math, art, and music. This contributes not only to increased literacy rates, but also to creative innovation and economic prosperity. Children learn from examples, so setting a good example is essential.

Answer 3: Since our founding days, immigrants have added to the fabric and composition of our American values. They have not diluted our values at all, but have greatly enriched our values. Passing meaningful immigration reform should be a priority if we are to ensure a stable and healthy American culture. We all know the economic and cultural value that generations of immigrants have brought to our society. It is also essential to pass the bi-partisan DREAM act that will help lay the pathway for minors whose hearts and souls are already Americans to be able to become citizens.

Answer 4: Expanding the option of Medicare to 50 and above is a viable and economic solution to the ensuring more Americans have health insurance. It provides low administrative overhead cost...
for what the private insurance industry considers high cost coverage. With reduced costs, private insurance should have no excuse but to lower premiums for younger Americans and be able to expand coverage. Expanding Medicaid, especially in states that refuse expansion, is a must to ensure those at that those who cannot afford health insurance have health coverage.

Answer 2: As a grandmother of ten - I believe that every child deserves access to a first-class education. While the state, local school boards, our teachers, and parents are better equipped to make decisions about the educational needs of our children than the federal government, I support an investment in all types of learning including technical training that prepares our students for success in the workforce. Having served as Mayor of San Marcos, home of Texas State University, I understand the skyrocketing cost of tuition. We must devise a common sense plan to keep these costs in check.

Answer 3: There is no question that our immigration system is broken and for far too long Congress has failed to address this critical issue as a matter of national security. As a nation founded by immigrants, we must find ways to prevent people from overstaying their visas, secure our border, properly screen refugees and produce a common sense policy that allows non-permanent immigration legal for temporary highly skilled workers or students who graduate from American universities with advanced degrees- this is another avenue for innovation and innovative approach to growing our economy.

Answer 4: America is known as the land of opportunity and our nation’s health care system should be no different. American’s should have more choices, lower costs, and greater flexibility in their health insurance options. A one-size-fits all solution is not the answer. People with pre-existing conditions or complex medical needs should have access to affordable coverage and high quality options. It costs billions of dollars and over a decade to develop new prescription drugs - driving the costs to all Americans higher. We must reduce the government red tape and find sensible solutions that benefit all.

Answer 5: America has always been the leader for greater good and as such we must uphold the principles of effective diplomacy and a strong defense that is based on peace through strength. One of the most important responsibilities of our government is to keep our nation safe, protecting us from threats around the world and we must honor our commitment to our armed forces by providing the best and most effective resources available. America should always stand with all of its allies who share our values.

Answer 6: Poverty has grown tremendously and in District 35 over 190,000 people live in poverty. We are in the bottom tier of the nation for working women and children living in poverty with no way out of the cycle. Congress must address the issue of poverty, as well as, finding sustainable solutions to fix broken federal programs such as veteran’s healthcare, social security, and medicare. Many years ago our government made a commitment to America’s veterans and our senior citizens and it is the job of Congress to find sensible solutions to ensure these programs remain intact for generations to come.

Lloyd Doggett (D)

Background: A life-long Texan, I have served in the TX State Senate (1973-85), TX State Supreme Court (1989-94) and U.S. House of Representatives (1995–present)

Education: BA Business, JD, University of Texas at Austin

Campaign website: www.votedoggott.com/

Answer 1: Support both. Replace short memorial moments of silence with genuine action to prevent repeated tragedies. Too dangerous to fly should mean too dangerous to buy guns, while assuring reasonable due process rights for those improperly listed as dangerous. Approving universal backround checks, eliminating gun show/internet loopholes is not inconsistent with Second Amendment. Gun owners know importance of keeping the safety on. Ban military-style assault weapons, designed solely to kill humans quickly. Continued Support of Moms Demand Action, Texas Gun Sense seeking responsible changes.

Answer 2: Support stronger federal commitment to education from pre-K to post grad, including more resources for research and student financial assistance, particularly Pell Grants. Student debt overwhells too many; allow students to refinance expensive loans. Previously, I authored successful legislation to make FAFSA process less complicated and to provide $10,000 tax cut over four years to reimburse higher education expenses. Continued active support for improved workforce skills and job training, Capitol Idea, ACC, UT, Texas State, HTU, St Edwards-consulting students, faculty, and administrative.

Answer 3: Support. Instead of building walls, build bridges. Immigration reform will grow Texas economy—more small business startups and more student graduates. US House wrongly denied opportunity to vote on bipartisan comprehensive reform of our broken system approved three years ago by Senate. Tearing families asunder by deporting millions will not work. Better to require paying a fine, any back taxes, criminal check and a path to citizenship for those who play by the rules. America must remain a beacon of hope for refugees fleeing violence and oppression, while safeguarding American families.

Answer 4: Support significant ACA improvement. AARP recognized me for strengthening seniors’ health access with “Champion Legislative Leadership Award.” I lead Prescription Drug Task Force to seek end to pharmaceutical price gouging that threatens patients and taxpayers. For the insured, my “End Surprise Billing Act” would stop unexpected medical bills from an out-of-network provider. For the uninsured of which Texas has more than any other state, Medicaid expansion essential. A public option and right to buy into Medicare would help more access a family doctor. Better mental health, long term care.

Answer 5: Safeguard American families. I actively opposed the biggest foreign policy mistake in American history, the disastrous Iraq invasion, which continues to extract a high price in blood and dollars. I helped lead successful effort supporting nonviolent action to prevent Iranian nuclear weapons. Will continue demanding changes in policies toward purported allies Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, and Pakistan, whose policies often undermine American security. Two-state solution essential to security of our ally Israel. Overcoming ISIS requires using all our strengths, not solely military.


Rhett Rosenquest Smith (L)


Education: Bachelor of Arts, Univ.of

Continued on Page 10
Texas, Austin, Plan II, Accounting major; Outstanding Student, Eastland High School, Class of 1968; Interfaith Coalition Campaign website: RhetterforsCongress.com

**Question 1:** What training and experience qualify you for this position?
**Question 2:** What are your opinions about the Sunset Advisory Commission recommendations regarding (a) changing the name to the Texas Energy Resource Commission and (b) transferring administrative hearings and utility rate setting to other state agencies?
**Question 3:** How can the agency move forward with the challenges of regulating energy resources in an environment of continued urbanization, water concerns, and seismic activity?
**Question 4:** Aside from the issues above, what are other serious issues the Railroad Commission will face, and how would you address them?

**Wayne Christian (R)**
**Education:** BBA in General Business  
Stephen F. Austin University  
**Campaign website:** ChristianForTexas.com

**Answer 1:** During my time in the Texas House, I served as Vice-Chair of Regulated Industries and as a member of the Energy Resource Committee. I am the only candidate in this race with experience in doing what the railroad commission actually does — create an environment that protects our communities while promoting responsible oil and natural gas production.

**Answer 2:** (a) A name change would provide clarity for the public as to what the Railroad Commission does, however it would also be costly and potentially open the agency up to further regulation from the Federal Government. The Railroad Commission has no authority to change its own name, that responsibility belongs to the democratically elected Texas Legislature. My hope is that if they decide to change the name, they do so through a Constitutional Amendment and not through the Sunset legislation. (b) I am against moving functions of the Democratically elected Railroad Commission to other state agencies that are not accountable to the voters.

**Answer 3:** Whether the production is happening in urban or rural areas, we must ensure that all energy production is done in a way that is safe and responsible. The Sunset Review this session is a the biggest immediate challenge. If elected, I intend to spend a lot of time in the legislature visiting with legislators about the importance of getting this done this session to ensure certainty for the oil and natural gas industry safety of the public. Continued IT improvements is a necessity, increased transparency of how contested cases are managed, and ensuring the Commission properly identifies permanently orphaned wells as compared to temporarily abandoned wells. These are essential to maintain public confidence in agency oversight. Also, qualified personnel are being lost to other state agencies and other opportunities due to lower pay. This should be reviewed and a plan drafted to preserve qualified personnel.

**Grady Yarbrough (D)**
**Education:** Obtained a Bachelors degree in Business Education. Also, obtained a Master of Education in Guidance, Counseling, as well as Certification in Public school administration.

**Answer 1:** My training in the field of Education, dealing with difficult human problems, qualifies me to deal with varied, and complex issues.

**Answer 2:** The sunset recommendation on name change, I would support. Its the people who sit on the commission that makes critical decisions, not the name itself, however to relieve any confusion about the commission, I would support a name change. b) I would support transferring administration hearing, and utility rate settings to other state agencies. This would, in my judgement, remove the opportunity for commissioners to be tempted into graft, greed, and bribery.

**Answer 3:** A process of moving forward would be to adapt to the changing demographics of our environment. New practices, and procedures must be adapted in order to meet the growing challenges we face, as a growing state, to meet our Environmental, Educational, and Economical needs going forward. a) As for water concerns, there is a great danger that our drinking supply could become contaminated from refuse water stored below the surface in caseins. These Storage facilities could shatter with a strong enough earthquake. Therefore, I recommend that Fracking, which leads to Earthquakes, should not be conducted in sensitive areas, such as School playgrounds, and classrooms, Hospitals, Churches, as well as senior citizens residents. The risk is too great for our most vulnerable people.

**Answer 4:** The commission has lost confidence with the public, as an honest and transparent agency. I would insist that no commissioner accept any contribution from companies doing business before it. Each commissioner would be expected to sign a...
Texas Railroad Commission

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pledge, not to accept any moneys, only their regular salaries.

Mark A. Miller (L)
Education: BS
Engineering Harvey
Mudd College 1972; PhD Petroleum Engineering
Stanford University 1983
Campaign website: www.miller4tx.com/
Answer 1: 44+ years as a practicing petroleum engineer, 18 of which were spent on the petroleum engineering faculty at UT Austin. Before retiring, had a worldwide consulting practice and was CEO/CTO of a small company that provided software to the oil and gas industry.
Answer 2: I support the Sunset Commission staff recommendations. The Legislature should change the Commission’s misleading name in the interest of transparency and good government. Separating judicial proceedings from rule making and regulatory enforcement removes a clear conflict of interest. Whether such conflicts are imagined or real, removing such conflicts will increase public trust.
Answer 3: These issues, which will continue as share resources continue being developed, should be given top priority. To respond to these and other issues and to improve public trust, the Commission should: a) disavow its role as industry champion, b) continuously sunset review all rules and regulations, c) increase its focus on surface property rights, and d) improve its technical expertise by utilizing outside technical resources.

Martina Salinas (G)
Education: Bachelor’s of Civil Technology in Construction
Management-University of Houston
Campaign website: www.facebook.com/ salinastxr
Answer 1: I have spent the last ten (10) years in the construction industry in both private and public sectors involved in heavy civil projects. To clarify, I am not an industry insider nor am I a career politician.
Answer 2: I am just an ordinary citizen, who believes the commission has willing become tone deaf to the concerns of Texas citizens. As an industry outsider, I want to stand for and with my fellow citizens and ensure the commission stops holding private industry profits over the private property rights of Texas Citizens.
Answer 1: I agree with the Sunset Advisory Commission recommendations: A) A name change for the Railroad Commission is long overdue. The proposed name adds further clarity to an otherwise confusing title. B) Other agencies are better equipped to handle the administrative hearings and setting of utility rates.
Answer 3: I believe the state needs to become stricter with what energy companies we allow to work in our beautiful state. We cannot allow subpar operations in this state. I, also, see a need for preoperative assessments to be submitted to the state i.e. the Railroad Commission before any operations are allowed to proceed. Pre-existing conditions such as air quality, water quality, and fault line locations need to be documented and submitted throughout all operations. In the reality, the agency needs funding to hire more well site inspectors. But in all honesty, all these problems will be avoided when Texas transitions to a sustainable clean energy source such as; wind, water, solar, geothermal, and hydroelectric.
Answer 4: The oil and gas industry has a long and proud history in Texas, but the boom and bust cycles of fossil fuel development are devastating to many local economies. Texas needs to develop a sustainable energy plan. The Commission should become the prompter and facilitator for renewable energy development and usage. Texas needs to become an international renewable energy innovative leader. In recent months, the commission has once again shown they do not hold the public interest as their priority. As has been reported, the commission for the past 30 years has allowed the oil industry to inject industry wastewater without the necessary permits required. It has failed to track that wastewater and allow it to possibly contaminate our aquifers in which we rely on for 60% of our water use.

Texas Supreme Court

Question 1: What training and experience qualify you for this position?
Question 2: How do you maintain impartiality, given the need to raise funds for political campaigns?
Question 3: The Texas Supreme Court has administrative control over the State Bar of Texas, licenses at-torneys, and appoints members to the Board of Law Examiners. What rules or procedures are needed to provide protections for the public?
Question 4: What are the most important issues facing a Supreme Court Justice, and how would you address them?

JUSTICE, PLACE 3

Debra Lehmann (R)
Education: A member of Phi Beta Kappa. I graduated with high honors from The University of Texas in 1979 and The University of Texas School of Law in 1982; I am a candidate for an L.L.M. in Judicial Studies from Duke University School of Law.
Campaign website: judgedebralehmann.com
Answer 1: With a total of 28 years judicial experience, I have served on this Court for over 6 years and have written on a vast number of complex legal matters including oil and gas, contract interpretation, commercial, corporate and securities law, tax, torts, family and probate law, civil procedure & evidence.
Answer 2: The importance of judicial independence— that is, the duty to apply the law equally and neutrally to all parties— cannot be overstated. It is imperative that judges serve with humility, that they exercise restraint, and that they fairly and neutrally apply the law equally to all litigants. I am bound by the Code of Judicial Conduct to apply these principles across the board, and never waiver in my obligation to do so.
Answer 3: I have the honor of serving as the Court’s liaison to the Board of Disciplinary Appeals and the Commission for Lawyer Discipline. In this capacity, I have devoted many hours to ensuring that complaints are handled in an efficient and just manner. The recently enacted Civility Oath is an example of the Court’s ongoing concern that lawyers conduct themselves with utmost professionalism at all times.
Answer 4: I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure our caseloads are handled in a proper, yet timely manner so we do not have backlogs of unresolved cases. On the administrative side, I will also remain active with the Access to Justice Commission which performs a vital role in helping all Texans get quality legal representation regardless of their ability to pay.

Mike Westergren (D)
Education: Juris Doctorate, University of Texas School of Law, 1970; Bachelor of Arts, University of Texas at Austin, 1967; Associates of Arts, Del Mar College, 1965
Campaign website: westergren.com
Answer 1: More than 30 years of broad judicial experience, civil, family law, and criminal. I received the award of Outstanding District Court in 1995. My first elected office was Justice of the Peace. After one term, I was elected Nueces County Attorney for two terms. After one term, I was Justice of the Peace. After one term, I was appointed District Judge in 1984 and was subsequently elected until retirement at the end of 2000.
Answer 2: Contributions to my campaign are capped at $50 per donor.
Answer 3: The legal system has become so expensive that as a practical matter, it is only available to the very wealthy. Effort should be made to make legal services more available to more people. See next response.
Answer 4: A judge is not allowed to comment on how he or she will rule in a particular matter, but as a general matter the Court must devote more attention to making legal services available to more citizens of Texas. The major way that this can be done is by simplifying the law. Much of the complexity of the law is unnecessary and should be make more simple and understandable.

Kathie Glass (L)
Education: University of Georgia, B.A., English 1974
University of Georgia, J.D. 1977
Campaign website: lptexasjustice.com
Answer 1: I have over 30 years experience as a practicing trial and appellate lawyer. I have worked in small, medium, and large firms, and headed my own law firm. I have no ties to any industry, labor union, corporation, or special interest. Cronyism has corrupted the two party system including our courts. I am not a Republican, not a Democrat, and -- definitely -- not a crook. We need justices

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Texas Supreme Court

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who will adhere to the United States and Texas Constitutions and the Rule of Law.

Answer 2: I have no ties to any industry, labor union, corporation, or special interest. I am not a crony. I have raised no funds from any of those entities. I have only raised funds from myself and other liberty-minded individuals. My three top donors are me, myself, and I. Texas voters can be assured that I will adhere to the United States and Texas Constitutions and the Rule of Law and refuse to do the bidding of the cronies.

Answer 3: A free people need a functioning legal system. The Supreme Court must protect our Texas Constitutional right to a jury trial. Rules of Civil Procedure, which the Court oversees, must make jury trials easier, cheaper, and faster, and less subject to attack on appeal. A court of discretionary review, the Court must take more cases where a jury trial was denied in order to give teeth to these Rules. It must issue more written opinions so the public knows the Rule of Law is being followed and decisions based on well-known principles, and not decided ad hoc to benefit favored persons or groups.

Answer 4: A free people need a functioning legal system. Our Texas Supreme Court is the highest court regarding Texas law but acts as if it is subservient to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court must nullify unconstitutional opinions by the U.S. Supreme Court by refusing to treat them as binding precedent. Slavish adherence to wrongly decided precedent has gutted the protections of both our federal and Texas Constitutions. Texas justices must honor their oath to enforce both Constitutions. I will honor my oath even if I stand alone on the Court and the U.S. Supreme Court has wrongly ruled otherwise.

Rodolfo Rivera
Munoz (G)


Campaign website: www. rodolforiveramunoz.com

Answer 1: Born an “Indian” in Texas on 1945, I came to realize Invader-Americans were falsely claiming to be the “Ultimate Sovereign” from here. Litigation has established this putative state was fraudulently established and has no jurisdiction over me because the rule of law permits only “the people” to establish such and it does not here exist. I am the only candidate who knows and understands this and therefore the only candidate qualified to work to establish a government under the rule of law here!

Answer 2: By presenting my case myself, I continue to work with others only for message dissemination understanding that the responsibility for truth and also for the consequences is strictly mine. I accept no corporate donations and while I expect to raise funds to get the word out, my focus will remain to disclose the truth by not engaging in the deception of the Americans in the past but in getting the truth before the voters so they can make up their own mind. Humanity must recognize and acknowledge that “Indians” are human right imbed even if Americans have never so recognized and acknowledged.

Answer 3: The best protection for the public is genuine and sincere adherence to the rule of law. The U.S. Constitution is a marvelous document but it continues to be availed off to deceive my People and the world as well as posterity. We must apply the rule of law. Amendment of the Constitution must be fairly pursued after all People are told the truth and permitted a reasonable opportunity to prepare for all necessary redress and renewed and/or revised articulation of the law. The ultimate objective must be to allow the Autochthonous to have a completely fair and equal input into all future law.

Answer 4: It is impossible to go back and try to “re-invent the wheel” but we must pursue a society which accords all within its borders, equal justice under law. It is therefore imperative that the System in place continue to function as it presently does so that the Texas Supreme Court works towards formal recognition and acknowledgement of the truth but also adheres, in all future articulations, to the established precedent so long as fully consistent with the rule of law. The Court must officially recognize and commit itself to making today’s society what it should have had historically become!

JUSTICE, PLACE 5

Paul Green (R)

No response.

Dori Contreras
Garza (D)

Education: Pharr San Juan Alamo High School – May 1976; University of Texas at Austin – BBA in Accounting, December 1980; University of Houston Law Center – Juris Doctorate, May 1990.

Campaign website: justicedori.com

Answer 1: I am in my fourteenth year of service on the 13th Court of Appeals. I have authored over seventeen hundred opinions, and I have participated in more than five thousand cases as a panel member. I have exhibited the strong work ethic and even-handed temperament that is necessary in an appellate judge.

Answer 2: I maintain impartiality by disregarding the identities of the parties, lawyers and judges that are involved in each case. I make my decision based on the law and the facts of each case, and nothing else. I firmly believe that voters and campaign contributors want, first and foremost, to have a jurist on the court who will treat them fairly and impartially, and who will apply the law accordingly.

Answer 3: Currently, there are adequate rules in place for the protection of the public; in particular, the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct and the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct. At this time, I do not believe additional rules are necessary. However, enforcement of the rules must be strengthened. Too often, attorneys and judges engage in misconduct that causes unfair results to litigants who are then left with little recourse.

Answer 4: The most important issue, and a central theme of my campaign, is the need to restore balance to the Court. For more than twenty years, the Court’s nine justices have all been of the same party and judicial philosophy. Many Texans have lost faith in the Court because these justices have consistently favored big business and big government, at the expense of individual litigants and consumers. I will provide a perspective that is lacking.

JUSTICE, PLACE 12

Charles E. Waterbury

(G)

Education: Bachelor of Science Texas Christian University 1989 Cum Laude Juris Doctor Baylor University 1992

Campaign website: www.waterburylawpc.com

Answer 1: I have been practicing for almost 25 years on behalf of people who otherwise would have no legal representation. I have seen first hand how having a Texas Supreme Court run by insurance companies has destroyed hundreds of years of Texas Common Law in the pursuit of increasing insurance companies’ profits.

Answer 2: I do not raise funds nor accept donations.

Answer 3: The proper protections are theoretically in place however the implementation and enforcement no longer occurs.

Answer 4: After thirty years of precedent destruction, the challenges are almost infinite. But I believe that should the Texas Supreme Court be returned to the people of Texas rather than moneyed interests then the immense challenges can be met and over come.

JUSTICE, PLACE 9

Eva Guzman (R)

Education: Duke University School of Law, L.L.M. Judicial Studies South Texas College of Law, Jurs Doctor University of Houston, B.B.A.

Campaign website: www.evaguzman.com

Answer 1: As a sitting Texas Supreme Court Justice and a former intermediate appellate court and trial court judge, I have presided over hundreds of cases and ruled on thousands of civil and criminal appeals. I bring to my daily work, a conservative judicial philosophy, a strong work ethic, superior credentials and a firm commitment to excellence. Leaders in the legal community have given me high marks for my performance on the bench. These accolades attest to my strong track record of service.

Answer 2: As judicial candidates, we have an obligation to inform the public about our qualifications and the issues in judicial races. Under the present system, funding for judicial races comes from many sources, including lawyers. But, importantly,

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Texas Court

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the many Texans that have supported my campaign expect and ask only one thing: that I perform my duties with the dignity, honor, honesty and integrity that is expected of the office — it is a request that I am proud to uphold each and every day.

Answer 3: As a Court, we best serve the public when we promulgate rules that protect the public and that are fair to all stakeholders in our system of justice. The present rules are imperfect and should be revisited to address changes made necessary by new technologies, 21st century practice models, and other substantive areas that may allow potentially unethical conduct to go unsanctioned. An effective rule-making process will include input from the public and the Bar and should be a priority for the Court.

Answer 4: We must all be introspective and continue to evaluate how well we do our jobs. I believe the Court must continue to improve transparency so the public’s confidence in our system of justice is strengthened. We must work to manage our docket as efficiently as possible. We should also continue to improve access to the courts by poor Texans and expand Veterans courts. I am committed to the work of the Court’s Access to Justice Commission.

Savannah Robinson (D)
Education: High School - College Station ISD
College - Rice University
Law School – University of Texas Law School
Answer 1: 32 years of trial and appellate practice.
Answer 2: I haven’t raised funds.
Answer 3: I’d like the Texas Supreme Court to be more pro-active in assisting pro se (self represented) parties. This has been started. The TxSct has forms for simple divorces on its website. That could be clearer, more streamlined, and possibly with a “wizard” to help people fill them out. I also think procedures for small estates, or simple estates, could be streamlined, made less confusing, and forms provided. I am also concerned with the lack of good interpreters, especially in South Texas.
Answer 4: Voting rights. I don’t know how I would address them - the case is not before me.

Don Fulton (L)
Education: Arlington High School, 1968
(honors) University of Texas at Arlington, 1972 B.A. Economics, (Honors) Army ROTC
Answer 1: I have experience in the following courts: The US Supreme Court, The US Court of Appeals 5th Cir., United States Dept. of Justice, Board of Immigration Appeals, Texas Supreme Court, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Texas Courts of Appeals, at Fort Worth, Dallas, and Waco. Trial courts: US District Court, US Bankruptcy Court, US Immigration Court, State Courts in Tarrant, Dallas and 33 other counties. Tengo experiencia en todos los tribunales mencionados
Answer 2: I do not solicit or accept campaign contributions. I do not run charities or other shams to hide influence peddling. I have not been groomed by a big firm, former employer, who has continuing business before the court. I rely heavily on the free social media and do not accept the premise that I need to raise funds. Yo no solicitar ni aceptar las contribuciones de campaña. No puedo ejecutar obras benéficas u otros shams para ocultar el tráfico de influencias. No he sido arreglados por una gran empresa, ex empresario, quien ha continuado las actividades ante la corte. Confío mucho en la libertad
Answer 3: The Texas Rules of Appellate Procedure should be amended to prevent any justice of an appellate court from seeing or learning the name of the lawyer of law firm filing a request for relief That info being kept solely in the clerk’s office. This would do more to get campaign contributions out of the decision making process than all the other laws. The Court should recommend a Texas Rule of Ethics to prohibit an attorney from accepting employment in a case where the judge is a former partner or one to whom the attorney have given over $250 in campaign funds. I have more suggestions than space.
Answer 4: See my recommendations above as to campaign finance. The Court should also undo the damage is had done with its amendments to the Rules of Civil Procedure for Justice of the Peace Courts. The 2013 amendments were very favorable to debt collection companies and creditors other than the original creditor. These mendments have the “appearance of impropriety”. Por favor, debe ver mis recomendaciones anteriores en cuanto a la financiación de la campaña. El Tribunal también debe deshacer el daño que se ha hecho con sus enmiendas a las Reglas de Procedimiento Civil de los Juzgados de Paz.

Jim Chisolm (G)
No response.

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals

Question 1: What training and experience qualify you for this position?
Question 2: How do you maintain impartiality, given the need to raise funds for political campaigns?
Question 3: What, if any problems, exist with the current methods for appealing the death penalty? Additionally, when should the death penalty be sustained or overturned?
Question 4: What are the most important issues facing your court, and how would you address them?

JUDGE, PLACE 2

Mary Lou Keel (R)
Education: JD, University of Houston, 1985; BA, University of Texas, 1982.
Campaign website: maryloukeel.com
Answer 1: I have served as a felony trial court judge for over 21 years. Before that I served as a trial and appellate prosecutor, and my first job after law school was as a briefing attorney at the First Court of Appeals. I have been board certified in criminal law since 1990. My career has focused on criminal law and has combined felony trial and criminal appellate experience making me uniquely qualified to serve on the Court of Criminal Appeals.
Answer 2: I maintain impartiality by making rulings based on the law and the evidence.
Answer 3: The biggest problem is delay, but that is largely due to the federal writ process, which is out of the hands of the State of Texas. The death penalty should be sustained or overruled in a particular case depending on whether (1) the evidence supported the conviction and sentence and (2) the proceedings were administered fairly and in accordance with the law.
Answer 4: I would like to see the Court of Criminal Appeals issue more decisive opinions that are clearly written and that delineate bright line rules for the administration of criminal justice in the trial courts of Texas. I would address these issues by writing clear opinions and sticking to them when possible, consistent with the pursuit of justice.

Lawrence “Larry” Meyers (D)
No response

Mark Ash (L)
Answer 1: Twenty-three years as a solo and small-firm lawyer representing persons charged with crimes in both state and federal courts. Also, I have represented numerous indigent persons through the court appointment system.
Answer 2: I do not accept campaign contributions. Judges must be impartial and must recuse themselves in any case in which their impartiality may be questioned. I will honor my oath to impartially, follow the law and not participate in any case where my impartiality is questioned.
Answer 3: The death penalty is not a penalty per se. Executions are state-sanctioned killings. The alleged offender’s life is shortened for the primary purpose of providing retribution to members of the victim’s family. Life without the possibility of parole is usually a more reasonable alternative to the death penalty and should be sustained whenever possible.
Answer 4: A Court of Criminal Appeals judge’s most important duty is to be loyal to the letter and spirit of the United States and Texas Constitution.

Decisions of appellate courts must be well-reasoned, logical and most importantly, follow existing laws including

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Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and Texas 3rd Court of Appeals

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constitutional laws.

Adam King Blackwell Reposa (G)
No response

JUDGE, PLACE 5

Scott Walker (R)
No response.

Betsy Johnson (D)
No response.

William Byron Strange (L)
No response.

Judith Sanders-Castro (G)
Education: Bachelor of Fine Arts; Doctorate of Jurisprudence
Answer 1: Practicing attorney for 35 years.
Answer 2: Have accepted and do not.
Answer 3: I do not support the death penalty.
Answer 4: The lack of understanding of the public of the court and its responsibilities. No term limits.

JUSTICE, PLACE 6

Michael E. Keasler (R)
Education: B.A. University of Texas at Austin, 1964 L.L.B. University of Texas School of Law, 1967
Campaign website: judgekeasler.com
Answer 1: 48 years criminal law experience --- 2 years private practice, 12 years prosecutor, 17 years trial judge, 17 years on State’s highest criminal court; leadership positions at every phase of career; clarity, consistency, and commonsense of judicial opinions; demonstrated work ethic; national reputation for judicial teaching and scholarship.

Question 4:

What training and experience qualify you for this position?
Question 2:
The SBOE is selecting a facilitator to assist with planning and preparation of a long range plan for education. What is your vision for public education to identify core values that will guide Texas education into the future?

Question 3:

What is your opinion about the Texas Supreme Court decision that Texas education funding is Constitutional but inadequate and inefficient?

Question 4:

What are the most important issues facing the SBOE, and how would you address them?

DISTRICT 5

Ken Mercer (R)
Education: A.S. - San Antonio College B.A. Biology - University of Texas at Austin B.B.A. Accounting and Information Systems - University of Texas at San Antonio M.B.A. Finance and Management - St. Mary’s University P.M.P. Project Management Professional
Campaign website: www.VoteKenMercer.org

Answer 2: Core Values: 1) Implement a rock-solid program of reading and language arts that is centered on the proven successes of phonics, grammar, spelling, vocabulary and handwriting. 2) Prepare our students for the incredible career opportunities in STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. 3) Promote Civics, free market concepts and a keen understanding and appreciation of our United States Constitution. 4) Create a statewide “Bill of Rights for Parents” and a “Bill of Rights for the Classroom Educator.” Each has a right for good schools -- and for safe schools. Parents have a right to see what their children are being taught and tested. Educators have a right to be respected as professionals.

Answer 3: That is a funding decision of the Legislature -- not the State Board of Education. However, the Legislature must address the excessive taxation of our homes and other property -- while adequately funding our 8,000 campuses. I strongly believe the final funding decision must firmly point to a far greater percentage of education dollars going directly to the classroom -- and not to the administration. The explosion the last 20 years of administrative positions and excessive funding unrelated to the classroom is unacceptable. A lawsuit will never fix the problem. A change in priorities is the only answer -- priority one must be the classroom educator.

Answer 4: 1) Defeat Common Core and keep that failed federal process out of our 1,300 independent school districts and our 8,000 campuses. I will continue to lead that fight. 2) Protect the $33B Permanent School Fund (a.k.a. “The Children’s Fund”) which was established by our State Constitution to ensure our 5.3 million Texas students receive free educational materials. I will continue to fight against certain lobbyists / elected officials who want control of that fund. 3) Ensure Texas classrooms continue teaching phonics, grammar, spelling, and handwriting. 4) Influence the Texas Legislature to eliminate “teaching to a test.” 5) Require all textbooks be fully vetted by educators, parents and business leaders -- and required by State Law. 6) Teach true and accurate United States History that honors our military, promotes our free market system, and emphasizes the constitution and civics.

Rebecca Bell-Metereau (D)
Education: BA, MA, PhD, English Literature, specialization in Rhetoric, Composition, and Film Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington Indiana
Campaign website: voterebecca.com
Answer 1: 35 yrs teaching at Texas State University, 2 years in Chad teaching in Peace Corps, Fulbright scholar and teacher at University of St. Louis, Senegal; Service Excellence Award; Special Assistant to President of Texas State working on student retention 1995-97; Distinguished Teaching Award; Alumni Teaching Excellence; Media Studies Minor Developer and Director; Presidential Seminar Committee Chair; Texas Faculty Association; Faculty Senator; Planning & Zoning, Solid Waste Commissions, Neighborhood Association Chair and secretary, 10 years; San Marcos; consultant on curriculum for TEA; chair Faculty Senate Committee on Environment and Sustainability; author and researcher for 3 books, dozens of book chapters and articles, conference presentations; full professor has trained future teachers.

Answer 2: Subject experts for textbook

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& curriculum to analyze best material. No high stakes testing, micromanaging, imposing political or religious views. Encourage health & PE, art, music, civics, tech skills, librarians, counselors, dieticians & nurses. Manage permanent school fund ethically, avoid conflict of interest or investments that undermine public schools. Respect teachers, parents, students, rights of local school boards to decide needs of varied communities. My core values place public education at the center of our social and political culture, with dedication to seeking the truth, incorporating diverse views and new ideas into our system, and basing decisions on research and subject area experts. I see our education as a way of preparing for a future in which climate change, cultural clashes, and conflicting values will need to be negotiated and managed in a rational cooperative way that takes advantage of the best available science and widely recognized scholars and teachers.

Answer 3: I agree that the state funding is inadequate and not efficiently and strategically administered or allocated. I place top priority small class size, teacher pay, benefits, working conditions, time and flexibility to plan, collaborate, not compete against each other. Don’t use A-F grading for schools, which punishes poorer districts, special needs kids. The strongest correlation researchers have discovered is between income level and performance in Texas schools. Although a few exceptional schools in low-income areas do a wonderful job, the main problems teachers face concern income inequality. Schools must invest in pre-K education to level the playing field for all families and students, allowing parents who work to provide their children with a strong foundation for learning and a safe environment for exploring new ideas and skills. We must pay teachers adequately to draw the best teachers, and we must provide working conditions that ensure adequate time for planning and learning.

Answer 4: Lost confidence in board is a major issue: The board must correct the pillars. Poor curriculum that is a major issue: The board must correct the pillars. We must push more language skills, natural sciences, and nudge mathematics into the end result; a smarter Texas. I believe that everyone understands, including the TEKS in a manner more thoughtful than Common Core; all are more fair. The TEKS have better content and direct. The TEKS have better content and direct. We need accountability but need to find balance.

**Ricardo Perkins (L)**

**Education:** B. S. Chemical Engineering - The University of Texas at Austin Graduate Work / MBA - Arizona State University

**Campaign website:** www.ricardoperkins.info

**Answer 1:** I believe I am qualified for this position based on my extensive science, math, and engineering background, and considering the time that I have spent volunteering in schools as a visiting engineer in science classes. I have also assisted others in studying for their teacher certification and during that time became deeply interested in the TEKS. I believe that my multi-lingual background, appreciation for parent’s rights, desire to push for a better education for students, and my dissatisfaction of big government agencies, puts me in a prime position to win the support of Texans in District 5.

**Answer 2:** From the outside looking in, I do believe that the SBOE needs a facilitator to help the SBOE develop long-range planning and an education road map. I also hope that this same facilitator can develop a process to make the TEKS easier to read and understand with a format that will cause the learning goals to be more direct. The TEKS have better content and are more thoughtful than Common Core; all we need is to express the TEKS in a manner that everyone understands, including the children, so that we all have “buy-in” for the end result; a smarter Texas. I believe that we must push more language skills, natural sciences, and nudge mathematics into the younger children. We must build the core at an early age and ensure that children have the pillars to move forward. Vocational education is paramount once the pillars have been established. Artistic expression cannot be lost; nor can physical exercise. I desire our children to be smarter than we think they can be.

**Answer 3:** I believe that education funding should expand for school districts that have been properly audited and are meeting the goals for the children. I do not believe the current Recapture system is fair and I believe there should be a cap on the monetary transfers based on a metric, such as per pupil spending. We need to look closely at the contractual hiring of consultants and former educators in each of the Regions, and consider disallowing double-dipping where a retired educator returns as a consultant in a six-figure job. I suppose there is a lot of financial duplicity (waste) in the education system that should be spent on hiring teachers and increasing teacher salaries. Paying higher salaries will encourage more people to enter the teaching workforce and give school districts a better selection of individuals. It may be necessary to replace the current property tax based funding system with another type of system that is more fair.

**Answer 4:** I see the need for teaching children more about the natural sciences, mathematics, and multi-lingual skills at a young age as one of the most important goals of the SBOE. The basic understanding of core principles, as soon as possible in their lives, will help the children to establish the pillars and build upon them as they mature. We must educate them well when they are young and allow for them to blossom past that point as they take electives in art, athletics, or advanced science, and develop their careers in professions or vocations, as may be their choice. I support charter schools and the newer programs for the public schools to adopt charter school types of teaching curricula. It all starts with the local leadership. We must bring teaching down to a state level and stop spending resources trying to adapt it to a national program.

**DISTRICT 10**

**Tom Maynard (R)**

**Education:** Bachelor of Science and Teacher Certification, Texas Tech University

**Campaign website:** www.maynardfortexas.com

**Answer 1:** State Board of Education: 4 Years; Chairman Committee on Instruction-2 years Classroom Teacher: 13 years Local School Board Trustee: 6 years Parent: Shepherded 5 children through the public school; including one dyslexic child; 9 grandchildren will be in public schools Longest-serving chief executive of nation’s largest state student organization for career and technical (vocational) education-16 years; Currently president of National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education. Experience with disadvantaged students, both as a classroom teacher and through personal experience growing up as a resident of Cal Farley’s Boys Ranch; Experience in Fine Arts, with 17 years of choral/vocal music experience in church ministries Partner in two small businesses

**Answer 2:** Citizenship: The Texas Declaration of Independence cited the current governments failure to establish public education and followed with this remark: “...unless a people are educated and enlightened. It is idle to expect the continuance of civil liberty and the capacity for self government.” This sentiment was echoed in the preamble to Article 7, Texas Constitution which sets forth the mission of education as “...being essential to the preservation of the liberties and rights of the people.” Education must equip Texans to compete in a free market economy, fulfill their college academic potential, but most of all, have them prepared to engage as informed, discerning citizens and leaders.

**Student/Learning-Centered:** In our desire for accountability, we have created an assessment-driven environment which has become more about teacher/administrator and district accountability—the adults in the system—and less about students. We need accountability but need to find balance.
State Board of Education

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with a system seemingly built around standardized testing. People feel students are over-tested and under-taught. The STAAR is not within the purview of the SBOE, but the standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) being assessed are. A contributor to the testing angst are standards which are “a mile wide and an inch deep.” Framers of the first TEKS acknowledged that there was more content than what could be taught and mastered in a 180-day school year. I have authored and supported rule and procedural changes help streamline the TEKS, Long Range Plan for Public Education: Working toward a usable document with broad stakeholder support.

Judy Jennings (D)
Education: PhD in Educational Psychology, University of Texas, 2006 BA in Sociology, University of Texas, 1995
Campaign website: www.judyjennings.com

Answer 1: I have worked for 20 years in education, including time at the Texas Education Agency (TEA), I now work for an educational consulting firm and serve as Director of Assessment. Working at TEA provided me with a strong background in the responsibilities of the agency and SBOE, and my current work with teachers and schools keeps me informed about the daily successes and challenges of students.

Answer 2: Educators and business leaders alike tell us that students must be prepared to collaborate, think critically, and communicate effectively. Changing the focus from standardized testing to rigorous, engaging curriculum will return autonomy to teachers and prepare students for college and/or technical training. The facilitator must listen to teachers, college educators, parents, and business leaders to ensure these practices are fully represented.

Answer 3: Funding is inadequate. The schools I visit are struggling to make ends meet. Administrators are cutting essential programs such as fine arts, and postponing important infrastructure improvements. Current funding is inadequate to provide students with the educational experiences they need to be successful in the 21st century. SBOE members should join forces with those providing information to the legislature about the importance of fully funding education.

Answer 4: Keeping curriculum standards and textbooks free from personal or religious ideologies is an ongoing issue and I would help ensure writers and reviewers are recognized professionals in their field. Preparing students for the future is important work, and I would endeavor to provide teachers with access to the resources they need. I would work to prepare students for the 21st century, not the 17th century.

Texas Senate

Question 1: Over 100,000 people are shot each year in the U.S.; 72% of all violent killings involve guns as the weapon. Explain your support or opposition to existing gun laws in Texas? What specific new laws would you support?

Question 2: The Texas Supreme Court issued a ruling in 2016 upholding the state’s public school funding system as constitutional, while also urging state lawmakers to implement “transformational, top-to-bottom reforms that amount to more than Band-Aid on top of Band-Aid.” What specific actions will you take to improve the public school funding system?

Question 3: How would you improve the most urgent problems in the Child Protective Services program? (For example, issues such as early intervention, budget, caseloads, foster care)? Please be specific.

Question 4: The Legislature currently draws the voting district lines (redistricting). Why would you support or oppose a Citizen’s Independent Redistricting Commission at the State level?

Question 5: Texas currently has the highest percentage of uninsured residents in the nation. What will you do to ensure that adequate and affordable medical services are available to these Texans?

Question 6: More than 4.2 million Texans voted in the presidential primary race this year, the most in state history, according to the Secretary of State. However, among the 12 states that already have held primaries, Texas ranked second to last in voter turnout of residents 18 and older, at 21.5 percent. What would you suggest to improve voter participation in our elections? What do you see as impediments to voting in Texas and why do you think such matters are impediments?

Question 7: What other issues do you consider urgent that need Texas Legislative action in the next two years?

DISTRICT 21

Judith Zaffirini (D)
Unopposed

DISTRICT 24

Dawn Buckingham (R)
No response

Jennie Lou Leeder (D)

Background: Jennie Lou previously served as the Llano County Democratic Chair from 2007 until 2016.

Education: Graduate of Llano High School; Southwest Texas State University BS in Agriculture Ed., Ohio University Master of Science in Athletic Administration.

Campaign website: jennielouleeder.com

Answer 1: I am genuinely concerned about our voting rights and related laws in Texas. I believe that every American citizen should automatically registered to vote when they turn 18, unless they opt out, and that voter registration rolls must be accurate and secure. We also need a better standard for early voting, giving voters at least 20 days to vote in the evenings or on weekends before election day. And finally, Americans who have paid their debts to society and have served their sentences should have the right to vote in Texas. We must do everything in our power to protect Texans right to vote.

Answer 2: We have a responsibility to ensure that our state’s Child Protective Services (CPS) programs are fully funded along with increased staffing and training. Texas must become the nation’s leader in aggressive early intervention and caseload reduction. Our foster care system will be reviewed by the upcoming legislature and I will fight for children and foster parents to ensure our state is providing a safe and diverse home for our youth.

Answer 4: I support a Citizen’s Independent Redistricting Commission to create a more fair representation that better reflects our state’s population and unique regional needs.

Answer 5: More than 5 million Texans - including over 784,000 children - are uninsured. We can no longer in good conscience deny access to affordable health care for Texans. I’ll work to dispel myths and fix our draconian health care system. We’re also losing rural Texas hospitals and clinics due to a lack of funding and support by our legislature. I will work to promote a “Health Texas” program that includes private-public partnerships to expand pre-hospital EMS training and bolster critical access hospitals across the Texas.

Answer 6: I am genuinely concerned about our voting rights and related laws in Texas. I believe that every American citizen should automatically registered to vote when they turn 18, unless they opt out, and that voter registration rolls must be accurate and secure. We also need a better standard for early voting, giving voters at least 20 days to vote in the evenings or on weekends before election day. And finally, Americans who have paid their debts to society and have served their sentences should have the right to vote in Texas. We must do everything in our power to protect Texans right to vote.

Answer 7: Our public school finance system is broken. I’ll work in a bipartisan manner to replace the so-called “Robin Hood” school finance system with a more fair and equitable program. With changes to “No Child Left Behind”, the next legislature will be tasked with revising state laws and setting a high bar for all schools. I will bring my experience in education to stand up for teachers and fight vouchers that threaten rural and urban school districts.

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Texas Representatives

**Question 1:** Over 100,000 people are shot each year in the U.S.; 72% of all violent killings involve guns as the weapon. Explain your support or opposition to existing gun laws in Texas? What specific new laws would you support?

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**Question 7:** What other issues do you consider urgent that need Texas Legislative action in the next two years?

**DISTRICT 17**

**John Cyrier (R)**

Unopposed

**DISTRICT 20**

**Terry Wilson (R)**

Unopposed

**DISTRICT 45**

**Jason Isaac (R)**

Unopposed

**DISTRICT 46**

**Gabriel Nila (R)**

Background: Born and raised in El Paso. Former Science Teacher working with at-risk students.

Education: Bachelor’s Degree in Multidisciplinary Studies - UT-El Paso. Currently enrolled for Masters Degree in Education at Concordia University

Campaign website: gabrielnila.com

**Answer 1:** I would support reviewing where a person can legally carry a handgun as there was issues as to where a person can openly carry. I would also consider lowering fees so those that cannot currently afford to obtain a license can have that opportunity.

**Answer 2:** If we are going to continue with the current process, I will work to ensure that the school districts that have not been paying their proper share start paying. I have seen at least one school district that is not doing so. I also will look at alternatives that will not punish school districts from obtaining state funding that are not performing well based on standardized tests.

**Answer 3:** My opponent felt that veterans were not suitable to be case workers because they may have PTSD. I would encourage veterans to apply because they may have experienced PTSD and can work with children who are currently experiencing PTSD. I would also work on providing funding for proper pay and adding caseworkers to relieve caseloads. I would work with churches to help identify potential foster parents and identify new ways to help school districts identify children who need assistance sooner.

**Answer 4:** When I decided to run to be the State Representative for House District 46, I knew going in that the majority of the voters historically vote Democrat. I chose to run to be the representative of the people. I am staying neutral on this position because my goal is to represent both sides of the aisle at their Representative.

**Answer 5:** I am not a supporter of using federal block grants because the taxpayers would end up paying the bill to continue the expansion. I would look at our current eligibility program and identify cost effective ways through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services eligibility guidelines to ensure more children can get enrolled into the program.

**Answer 6:** While talking to the residents of my district, the major concern is voter apathy. Many voters do not like the candidates that are looking to represent them and so they choose not to participate. My goal is to work with those individuals who are within the community so they can see that a person like myself can work to make a difference and provide them with an opportunity to make their voices heard.

Prior to the changes in voter registration, my concern was non-profit organizations who refused to help community members apply to get the necessary forms needed to register to vote.

**Answer 7:** Fighting the gentrification concern in East Austin at the state level and expanding current laws on medical use of cannabis.

**Dawnna Dukes (D)**

No response

**Kevin Ludlow (L)**

Background: Kevin Ludlow is a 19-year resident of Austin. He is a small business owner, a community leader, an author, and former National representative.

Education: Bachelor’s Degree in Mathematics from the University of Texas at Austin.

Campaign website: www.ludlow2016.com

**Answer 1:** I would introduce legislation to legalize certain types of drugs thereby eliminating the black market responsible for a large portion of this gun violence. The savings on police and prison requirements would be reinvested towards improving social conditions further reducing violence.

**Answer 2:** Having a family full of teachers, I would support any legislation aimed at ignoring federal requirements imposed upon our education system. We are so politically focused on tying money to education and yet flippantly ignore myriad factors that actually enrich education. This includes coursework relevant to the 21st century, parental and community involvement, administrative accountability, diet and exercise, and not treating students as if they were incarcerated. I support legislation that ends the idea of “teaching to the test”, a well-known phrase debilitating to a child’s education.

**Answer 3:** While I certainly want the welfare of children accounted for above any other citizen, I am reluctant to support the State’s program at all. Reports of children being neglected, abused, and even killed while in the custody of the State is recurrent and abhorrent. Additionally, the State has continued to use non-violent drug offenses (marijuana use for example) as cause to separate children from their parents. I can think of few worse crimes than separating a mother from her children simply because the State disagrees with her morality.

**Answer 4:** I would support an independent redistricting commission. Gerrymandering is a tool that has plagued the American electorate for generations. It should be corrected. By carefully drawing districts, the two-party system maintains a firm grip on the electorate and suppress challenges to the status quo. Although I ultimately believe the two old parties would find and exploit holes in such a system, a transparent and citizen-driven redistricting would be a powerful first step towards eradicating the overall problem.

**Answer 5:** The first step in this problem is eradicating the notion that insurance somehow equates to better health care. It does not. We should focus on reducing the actual price of healthcare instead of padding corporate insurance and pharmaceutical coffers. This can be accomplished by increasing minor care facilities, increasing the supply of doctors with incentives and lower education costs, reducing medical regulations, mandating price transparency, and reducing malpractice claims. All of these could be spearheaded by the State of Texas and would have immediate and measurable results.

**Answer 6:** First and foremost, no person should ever be denied the right to vote on the grounds of insidiously crafted voter registration laws. I would fight against any such legislation in Texas. Secondly, it is high time we embrace 21st century technology and implement digital voting solutions. This would dramatically increase civic participation, provide voting receipts, and increase transparency. Finally, younger voters are far more informed of the realities of the two-party system. There is little reason to cast a presidential vote when the positions of the two old parties are near identical.

**Answer 7:** The single greatest danger to Texas is the so-called “War on Drugs.” This asinine practice popularized by the Nixon administration has destroyed families, made our State far more violent, and has done absolutely nothing to curb drug addiction. At the heart of this absurdity is a private prison system full of lobbyists profiting from drug laws. It has created a fictitious justification for militarizing police forces and has been used to incarcerate otherwise harmless individuals for victimless crimes tearing apart families in the process. I support Texas following the lead of Colorado.

**Adam Michael Greeley (G)**

Background: Born in Mankato, Minnesota, 1983. Raised in

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Texas Representatives

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Minneapolis / St. Paul area. Texan since May 2014, High-functioning autistic person, and 9-year Green.


Campaign website: Facebook.com/Adam M. Greeley for Texas State Representative District 46

Answer 1: It’s not wise to have an unarmed population. I support existing gun laws, and I support the right for students to carry at colleges and university. Most shootings occur in gun-free zones.

Answer 2: The public funding of schools is disparate, and unfairly based upon regionally-different property taxes.

We need to find a way to fairly fund schools. If we got rid of private schools, then people would find a way to fund public education.

Answer 3: Expand and reform Child Protective Services to implement a system to better protect children and not break up families. Fund by legalizing and taxing marijuana, and using the surplus of tax revenue to support appropriate budgets.

Answer 4: I believe that bureaucrats should not have the full say on districting. The people should have their say via representation, and we need to give power back to the people.

Answer 5: I would work on a bill to create a Texas state-level health care system, in lieu of Federal Funding. Preventive care, through Single Payer Healthcare, would be the best way to lower costs. Healthcare-for-all ensures that people seek early treatment, catching problems early and compassionately lowering the overall cost. I would support needle-exchange programs, which have been proven to lower disease (such as hepatitis C) and cost.

Answer 6: Restructure the voting laws to make it easier for third parties to run in the state. How can two parties represent the entire population of Texas? I would bring back Civics in school, and get rid of the restrictive Voter ID laws. I support same-day registration. In Minnesota, witnesses are allowed to vouch for registered voters status.

Answer 7: Create state funding for adult people with autism, and greater support for those who have other mental illnesses, and to support underserved military personnel so that no soldier would be left behind.

Marijuana reform.

Share-shelters throughout the state, wherein otherwise homeless people run the shelters, as is done in Seattle, to great acclaim.

DISTRICT 47

Paul Workman (R)

No response

Ana Jordan (D)

Background: Ana Jordan is a former state prosecutor and Assistant Attorney General. She lives in Barton Creek with her husband, Sean, and two children.

Education: University of Texas (B.A.); University of Texas School of Law (J.D.)

Campaign website: www.AnaforTX47.com

Answer 1: I support Texas’ concealed handgun law, but I would repeal Campus Carry because I believe the latter interferes with a primary purpose of academic institutions, which is to create an environment that encourages exploration of ideas by vigorous and unfettered debate.

Answer 2: I would pressure the Legislative Budget Board to update the Cost of Education Index as required by Tex. Educ. Code sec. 42.007 via mandamus if necessary. I would fight to end heavy dependence on local property taxes by increasing funding at the state level using multiple sustainable sources of revenue. The goal would be to expand the number of taxpayers paying into the system, so that the burden on any single category of taxpayer is less. I would fight to end “Robin Hood” and to simplify the system so taxpayers can better understand it and hold state-wide officeholders accountable.

Answer 3: Texas should hire enough caseworkers to adequately manage the CPS caseloads in each of the 254 counties throughout Texas. We should limit the caseloads to no more than 20 cases. We should closely monitor the use of foster group homes until the state can ensure they are safe and evaluate whether they should be used at all. In the meantime, the state could consider partnering with private parochial schools to encourage parents of attending students to sponsor a child in need. Finally, I would take into consideration the recommendations of the special masters.

Answer 4: I support the creation of an Independent Redistricting Commission because doing so would end the inherent conflict of interest that currently exists when incumbent politicians draw their own districts. As a former Assistant Attorney General defending the State of Texas during the last redistricting cycle, I watched officeholders from both parties manipulate district lines to eliminate competition in general elections in order to guarantee their re-election. Not only is this highly undemocratic, it leads to the worst kind of representation-polarized and unaccountable.

Answer 5: I would vote to expand Medicaid to accommodate the 1 million uninsured Texans who fall within the coverage gap, i.e. they are too poor to pay for regular coverage, but they make too much money to qualify for Medicaid under current eligibility criteria. Expanding Medicaid would also allow the state to accept billions of federal tax dollars to pay for the program, which would in turn free up billions of state tax dollars that we can use to pay for other things, such as increasing Medicaid reimbursement rates to encourage more providers to opt in.

Answer 6: I believe the biggest deterrent to voting is partisan redistricting. When competition is eliminated in general elections, which is the primary goal of partisan redistricting, candidates lack incentive to engage voters on issues, so voters become less informed. And, if they live in a highly gerrymandered district, general election voters believe their vote doesn’t matter. And in some cases, they’re correct. In this cycle, 97 of the 150 races in the Texas House of Representatives have already been decided because the candidates won their primary races and face no opposition in November.

Answer 7: I believe our Legislature has abdicated many of its responsibilities in recent years because it has allowed itself to be distracted by peripheral issues that, while important to a few, do not reflect the needs or values of the many. If elected, I would do my best in the next two years to focus on matters important to Texans, and District 47 constituents in particular, rather than spending limited time and resources on issues dictated by outside special interest groups pushing national agendas or on self-serving legislation.

Scott McKinlay (L)

No response

DISTRICT 48

Donna Howard (D)

Background: Rep. Howard has served as the State Representative for House District 48 since 2006. Prior to that, she served as a member of the Eanes School Board.

Education: Rep. Howard earned a Bachelor’s degree in nursing and a Master’s degree in health education, both from the University of Texas at Austin.

Campaign website: www.votedonna.com/

Answer 1: I support giving public universities the same ability to opt out of campus carry as private colleges, a state public awareness campaign for safe storage of firearms (to prevent suicide and the accidental deaths of children), and allowing less intrusive signs for businesses that prohibit open carry.

Answer 2: As a former school board member and current appropriator on the subcommittee dealing with education funding, improving the public school finance system is my top priority for the session. We should update the Cost of Education Index, which hasn’t changed in 25 years. This would benefit Austin ISD in particular, by returning to the district millions of dollars currently lost to recapture.

I’ll advocate that property tax collections be used to supplement, rather than supplant, state funds for public education. Finally, I’ll work to improve the use and funding of technology in our classrooms.

Answer 3: We must reduce the turnover of CPS caseworkers, which will require a salary boost for those positions. Recruiting and retaining high-qualified employees will help address the high caseloads that have put so many of our state’s foster children at risk.

We must invest more in kinship care, which is more cost effective than serving children in foster care and has better outcomes. I’ll also push for greater investment in home visitation programs, which will provide parenting education and support, help to lower instances of abuse, and potentially reduce the number of out-of-home placements.

Answer 4: I believe that voters should choose their elected officials, not the other way around. As a state representative, I have argued for removing the legislature from the redistricting process, and also abstained from votes drawing the lines of Texas House Districts.

In the last legislative session, I filed a bill which would establish an independent Redistricting Commission, much like redistricting bodies in the City of Austin and a variety of other states. Though the measure failed to get a hearing, I plan to file a similar proposal in the upcoming session.

Answer 5: In addition to having the highest rate of uninsured residents in the nation, Texas now has the highest number as well. It is critical that we adopt some form of Medicaid Expansion, and close the coverage gap for over 850,000 uninsured adults.

We must also renew the Medicaid 1115 waiver, which has brought down billions of federal dollars to fund innovative health projects throughout the state, and paid for uncompensated care in our hospitals. Loss
of the waiver could result in some hospital closures and would have a devastating impact on the availability of health care services in Texas.

Answer 6: I have strongly opposed policies that discourage and diminish the participation of students, minorities, and low-income citizens, such as the discriminatory Voter ID law.

I support efforts to establish online voter registration, which would make it easier to register and also cut costs for the state. I plan to refile legislation which would allow 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections, provided that they will be 18 on the date of the general election. This limited change could encourage teens to get key ed into the civic process early, and then remain involved throughout adulthood.

Answer 7: As a lawmaker, one of my top priorities has been women’s health. I fought against the disastrous budget cuts to those services back in 2011, and helped lead the charge for restoring funding in subsequent years. I will continue to work on increasing access to women’s health and family planning, particularly in light of troubling new data which indicate a rise in the rate of maternal mortality and morbidity in Texas.

Ben Easton (L)

Background: Teacher, Trainer, Writer, Philosopher

Education: B.A.

Philosophy - Washington & Lee Univ.

Answer 1: I support the 2nd Amendment. Well-trained, law-abiding citizens increase security, safety, and well-being. Numerous studies prove that “gun-free” zones are prone to higher crime rates. Therefore, I support Texas gun laws that reflect the 2nd Amendment and legally sanction licensed carry.

Answer 2: “Government-run” education is a system doomed to the failure that we have, in fact, been witnessing for decades. Proper government ought only to perform one basic function: to protect life, liberty, and property. Having the government run police and fire departments is rational and appropriate, as is having the government maintain a purely defensive military. Involving the government in education, given its tendency toward centralized control, leads to more inequity and waste than all the good intentions of those who foist a one-size-fits-all system on tax-paying citizens.

Answer 3: Child Protective Services is an important part of the safety net for those least able to fend for themselves. This is one of the few governmental agencies in which a budget increase is warranted. Caseloads are too high for most case workers, so more hiring is necessary. Decreasing red tape to allow and attract qualified personnel would help. Promoting and subsidizing new models for foster care is a priority, and, when appropriate, this service can be integrated with drug rehab and sober living programs.

Answer 4: I support the formation of a Citizens’ Independent Redistricting Commission. Such a commission ought to be gender balanced and reasonably diverse. It would be limited to no more than 25% lawyers ... no lobbyists ... no staff of any PACs. The results should be geometrically appealing; they would be simple and easy to describe with street boundaries or natural geographical features. Designating even one district that ends up looking like a serpent, or a pickpocket’s hand, would automatically dissolve the commission.

Answer 5: Beyond the judicial branch serving as an arbiter of legal disputes, government has no proper role in the insurance industry. I advocate the abolition of Obamacare along with all governmentally-ensnared programs that prohibit the proper functioning of the free market. It is outside the purview of government to provide medical care (except for abused/neglected children - see question 3 above). Crony capitalism and legislative corruption are responsible for the current “sick” healthcare industry, and I support the prosecution and conviction of all the guilty parties.

Answer 6: While practically everybody would agree that greater voter turnout implies greater civic investment by the public, trying to influence the level of voter participation is beyond the purview of proper government. That being said, it is of course one of the fundamental obligations of a democracy to provide for plenty of voting centers. Extending the voting hours on Election Day, as well as on some of the Early Voting Days, is a good idea. One more thing - I believe that my running for office as a Libertarian will diminish voter apathy while increasing enthusiasm and hope!

Answer 7: In numerous regions of our state, transportation infrastructure has deteriorated to unacceptable levels. I blame this more on bureaucracy and cronyism than on a lack of funds. In other words, raising taxes is not necessarily the way to fix some of these quagmires. For example, I would love to see an independent commission (or a team of brave journalists) shine the light on who, exactly, are the men and women responsible for the ongoing criminal negligence within TxDOT. How many municipalities have been tricked into voting for toll roads when public funds already existed to fix a problem?

DISTRICT 49

Gina Hinojosa (D)

Background: Immediate past President, Austin ISD School Board. Attorney for social justice organizations; community volunteer

Education: B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin, Plan II Honors/ Government degree. Law degree from George Washington University Law School, Washington.

Campaign website: ginaforaustin.com

Answer 1: I am opposed to “open carry” and “campus carry.” I oppose the possession of military-grade assault rifles. I support universal background checks. I support giving public universities the same rights that private universities have to opt out of “campus carry.”

Answer 2: All our public schools are in need of more funding, especially our high poverty and urban school districts. I support spending more out of the State’s General Revenue on school funding and wrap-around services for our high needs schools so children can come to school “ready to learn.” I support updating the 30 year old “cost of education index” which determines how much each district pays or receives under “Robin Hood” (This year Austin ISD paid over $400 million into Robin Hood while our “cost of living” is erroneously pegged as equal to Killeen’s. No other district pays nearly as much.)

Answer 3: CPS is significantly underfunded and children are dying as a result. We need to invest what is needed into CPS so that we can protect our most vulnerable children. This should not be a partisan issue. It is a moral issue.

Answer 4: I am significantly troubled by the redistricting process. The Texas Legislature has abused and overstepped their authority in how they have addressed redistricting in recent years, and Austin is a perfect example of this partisanship. I believe that legislatures (which are directly accountable to the electorate) should perform the role of redistricting. However, I could support an Independent Redistricting Committee assuming broad, diverse, and inclusive representation on the Commission.

Answer 5: If Texas expanded Medicaid coverage we would insure a million more low-income Texans. I support expanding Medicaid in Texas. Again, this should not be a partisan issue—it’s a moral one.

Answer 6: First, we need to make it easier to register. I support an online voter-registration system. We, also, must enforce current law that requires DPS to allow those renewing their driver’s licenses to register to vote. We must educate high school principals about their status as automatic voter registrars and their legal obligation to offer every 18 year old student an opportunity to register. Finally, we must refrain from passing state laws that are in violation of federal Voting Rights laws which limit one’s ability to vote, such as “Voter ID.”

Answer 7: I will make the environment a legislative priority and focus on the issues of water quality/quantity—promoting conservation; air quality - supporting reduction of carbon emissions; climate change - basing our decisions and policies on science; and supporting local control so that cities have the authority to protect their environment if the state fails to do so.

Women’s health: We must restore full funding to Planned Parenthood and stop the Republican assault on women’s reproductive rights.

Higher Education: We must restore cuts to higher education so all students have equal and fair access.

Rick Perkins (L)

Background: Political activities serving in several Media capacities in New York, California, North Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, New Hampshire and Texas.

Education: Attended UT Austin three years, moved to New York City to begin political career in media relations and press rep for several candidates and causes.

Campaign website: www. RickPerkinsforTexas.com

Answer 1: The gun laws of Texas are quite clear. I have been an active supporter of the Second Amendment as I was raised in a game hunting environment. More safety training and pre-screening would be my desire. I see no need for automatic high powered rifles or military assault weapons. Education is key.

Answer 2: Charter schools and more local control of individual school decisions. Parents should have more active involvement in deciding their children’s specific needs. Private religious based schools provide local and less expensive options to raising of public taxes. Local decisions and policies for individual schools will always work better than an across the board State or Federal mandates. Our children must have new technologies to prepare for the emerging high tech markets and careers ahead.

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Texas Representatives

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Innovation incentives for teachers and administrators will compel advancements for all.

Answer 3: Parents must become much more proactive and involved daily in educating their children—year round. Parents, not the States, are the leaders who must provide the highest examples for their children. Year round supervision and higher expectations from parents for their own children will compliment all in-class learning and social growth of their own children.

The State and the tax payers cannot be expected to provide the moral and character building expectations for every child. Too many children being left behind because of poor parenting.

Families must unite to support the children.

Answer 4: Taking away any over reach of the State is always a wonderful Victory. Looking at how the rigged two party system gerrymanders every district should provide power and contempt for active Citizens to seek the absolute best educational opportunities for their children. The local citizens know their districts and the flaws therein. Banishing the corrupt wasteful selfish political gains by our weak and immoral legislators is always a welcome Victory for our Citizens. Every single parent knows what is right and just for their specific districts and children.

Career politicians Do Not care.

Answer 5: Churches; charities and Non-Profits are absolutely better equipped to provide Local neighborhood services for those in need, from new borns to our vulnerable sweet elders.

Corrupt wasteful political lobbyists who line the pockets of career politicians ensure that average citizens suffer at the hands of Corporate Greed. Caring local Citizen-Activists are the purest and most cost efficient answer to every social ill we face. Ending the glut of government over reach into private citizens lives should be Priority 1 -- on All matters.

Lobbyists and corporate incentives must be banished to hades.

Answer 6: Citizens United must be banished to the Gates of Hell. He who has the money, Wins. You know this in your hearts. Citizens are well aware of the corruption in every statehouse. They feel left out of the process because they feel unheard. When the Public truly understands the issues their corrupt career politicians are forcing upon them, the Citizens must rally; form coalitions and Unite to use their own Power. 1 VOTE!! The vile putrid excuses we call politicians and their corporate shills will run away, like the vermin they are, when the Public stand up and unite against the State and VOTE !!

Answer 7: Focus on Educating our youth for the changing careers ahead. Get Bloat government out of our pockets and out of our bedrooms. TERM LIMITS! Sustainability such as water and power grids. End the senseless wasteful War on Drugs, Close Private Corporate Prisons that make money filling beds with minorities and petty offenses. Medical Marijuana and the Proven benefits are here. Once Big Tobacco and Alcohol Tyrants figure out how to control the emerging markets—Pot will be legal. Citizens must have Freedom from over regulation and endless permits stifling Growth. The People know All the Truth!

DISTRICT 50

Cesar Ruiz (R)

Background: U.S. Navy, Space and Naval Warfare Command, National Veterans Outreach
Program - Vice Chair
Education: BA St. Edwards University (Magna Cum Laude)
Campaign website: cesarrruiz.com

Answer 1: Contrary to popular belief guns do not kill people, criminals with guns do. We have a constitutional right to defend our family and ourselves. I will support laws preventing felons or mentally unstable individuals from obtaining guns, but only if it does not infringe on any constitutional rights.

Answer 2: Although the Texas Supreme Court ruled we fully met all minimal legal standards, we are Texas the greatest state in the union, and the word minimal should never describe our Education system. Our style of finance has flaws and as a result school districts throughout Texas often get left out. I believe educations role is just as vital to our communities, future, and national security as our military. I will work diligently with lawmakers, educators, and local school boards to ensure funding is properly and equally distributed. Together we will proactively find true solutions to our problems.

Answer 3: First, the Child Protective Service program (CPS) must be overhauled from the top down. It is unacceptable that so many innocent and vulnerable children go unprotected because of inept leaders and extreme workloads. Next, the state must take a serious look into better funding the CPS. Fixing the funding issue will allow more and better qualified caseworkers to be hired, better training, and an increased outreach with foster care homes. Finally, the state must require CPS to forge better alliances with local school districts to quickly recognizing child abuse issues and immediately intervene.

Answer 4: I will absolutely be in favor of a Citizen’s Independent Redistricting Commission, but only if the purpose of this commissions is to pass recommendations to our elected officials for approval. We speak our voice through our vote, sending a message loud and clear each election cycle whom we choose to serve as our representative. This is our most democratic duty and I will not infringe upon this by diminishing the responsibilities or our elected officials.

Answer 5: The best way to ensure everyone in Texas has adequate medical coverage is to overhaul and reform our current health care system using a market based style of approach. This will bring in bigger and better competition while driving down the costs to our citizens. At the same time we will receive a more transparent and accountable style of health care.

Answer 6: The best way to encourage voter turnout is through community involvement and participation. When people know and trust their candidates they will absolutely support them at the ballot. In today’s age of technology we can certainly make voting easier however voters must believe in the system to even consider casting a ballot. This is the biggest challenge because many believe their vote will not count and as a result many will choose to stay home rather than vote. I encourage everyone to get out and practice his or her most patriotic duty. Know the candidates and go make a difference.

Answer 7: Better school financing must be a top priority next session. We cannot give our students the highest level education they deserve if we cannot adequately fund their needs. We must also protect our Teachers Retirement System and ensure our educators are secure at the end of their career. Next, our military veterans and families should be reassured the Hazlewood Act will always be available to them without unnecessary conditions or restrictions. Finally, our transportation system will need a complete overhaul so that our citizens can finally receive the traffic relief they have been promised.

Celia Israel (D)

Background: Rep. Israel was named Freshman of the Year by her colleagues, Champion of Equality by the Texas, and Best First-Term by The Austin Chronicle.


Campaign website: celiafortexas.com

Answer 1: Like most Texans, I support both the Second Amendment and common-sense gun regulation. Most of us agree children shouldn’t have access to guns, guns don’t belong on college campuses, and open carry isn’t necessary or prudent. I’ll continue to fight for gun law reform backed by facts and data.

Answer 2: Texas legislators must prioritize education funding every single session. The Rainy Day Fund remains untapped while our kids suffer—this must change. It’s time to completely overhaul the school finance formulas, some of which have not been updated in decades, to reflect the actual costs of educating young Texans. I’ve heard from our teachers and administrators, who are underpaid and over worked. It’s high time the Legislature trusts our public educators and heed their recommendations—rather than attempt to pull funds away from our public schools.

Answer 3: While there are many challenges with Child Protective Services, Texas could vastly improve outcomes for its most vulnerable citizens by focusing on staffing issues. To properly function, the agency needs an adequate supply of professional, well-trained caseworkers and supervisors on the front lines. This is not the time to lower standards for caseworkers by relaxing college or degree requirements. Instead, improving CPS requires a substantial state investment in training and salaries to reduce turnover and ensure a professional workforce. This is a critical first step.

Answer 4: I fully support the creation of a citizen-led, independent redistricting commission. Voters should be selecting their lawmakers, not the other way around. The current system discourages voter participation and harms the legitimacy of our government. An independent redistricting commission would make the Legislature more representative of the people of Texas and would inspire more confidence in the governing process. I was an author on legislation that would have created an independent redistricting committee and will continue to support this effort next session.

Answer 5: Last session, I filed a bill to expand Texas’ Medicaid program, and I plan to continue this work. Medicaid expansion would not only help low-income Texans afford their medical bills, pay for needed prescription drugs, and obtain regular care for chronic conditions. It would also return millions of our federal tax dollars to Texas. I will continue to work with supportive Republicans to find a solution. Passing this legislation is the single most important

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action we can take to improve health care in the Lone Star State. It will directly result in a reduction of uninsured Texans.

Answer 6: As a member of the Elections committee, I will continue to fight to make voting easier, not harder. When the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals tells Texas that its voter ID law violates the Voting Rights Act’s prohibition on racial discrimination, the Legislature must act to repeal the law. Reforms such as the creation of an independent redistricting commission will give voters more confidence in the system and encourage participation in our democracy. I will continue to fight for online voter registration, which saves money and increases security.

Answer 7: Whether Republican or Democrat, we all sit in Central Texas traffic together. I continue to believe transportation is a nonpartisan issue that we can work together to improve. But simply adding more roads won’t reduce congestion. Instead, we must work to promote multi-modal solutions, including transit. My sincerest hope for next session is that we focus on our big issues (child abuse, public education, transportation, & the environment, to name a few) rather than argue over which restrooms people should use. Extremists want us to fight. I want us to work together for a better Texas.

DISTRICT 51

Eddie Rodriguez (D)

No response

Katija “Kat” Gruene (G)

Background: 17 yrs of Electoral Activism
focused on Voter-Verifiable elections and free & equal access to the ballot, and monetary reform

Education: Mount Holyoke College - PreMed/Computer Science Grand Canyon Univ - Communications

Campaign website: votekat.org

Answer 1: Like drugs, guns need to be treated as a public health/public safety issue. We need universal background checks, more regulation of manufacturers like childproofing, the installation of “smart chips” and regulation of gun dealers to limit “straw purchases” (legal purchases to pass onto others).

Answer 2: Robin Hood isn’t equitable by definition. This is not a sustainable system, especially when education is constantly on the legislature’s chopping block, and relies on property taxes, the Lottery, and “rainy day” funding. One sustainable source could come from the taxing of legal marijuana. The most successful schools are income-tax based systems, especially those who de-emphasize testing in favor of multi-modal learning, like Finland. Standardized and common core testing leads to results-based/fear-based education, and the $500 million to a private firm is money stolen from education.

Answer 3: Anything that is done will ultimately revolve around funding and agency philosophy. CPS has been understaffed, overworked, emotionally-draining, and underfunded for well over two decades. It is also the case that the focus is on removing children and not dealing with the root issue of the parents’ mental health and lack of community support. One community seeks to keep the children in the home and remove the abusive parents to rehabilitation centers instead, moving caregivers into the home with the children. Changing how we help children is vital.

Answer 4: Strongly support a truly independent redistricting commission. For too long those in power have controlled access through redistricting and other fraudulent forms of voter disenfranchisement. The two-party system is not part of our Constitution and the laws they create to force us into such a farce need to be revoked. If the Legislature and its funders maintain control over how the districts are drawn, it will not matter how many other electoral reforms we enact.

Answer 5: The best thing we can do is enact a single-payer health system for all Texans at the state level. We can apply bandaids by increasing funding to Medicaid, taking federal funds for Medicaid, etc., but in the end, there will remain a gap, the gap of people who don’t qualify for any services and can’t afford private insurance, which has become less helpful and more costly since the Affordable Care Act.

Answer 6: The system is rigged, so until we unrig it, participation will not increase significantly. Impediments are: not giving voters full information about ALL candidates, difficult to check your voter registration, DMV not registering voters, Voter ID laws, no voter-verifiable election results, preventing free and equal access to the ballot, straight-party voting, no public financing of elections (clean money campaigns). I know these are impediments because I have been talking to non-voters while working for ballot access and non-primary party campaigns for 16 years.

Answer 7: Ending prohibition on cannabis as: an industrial crop (hemp-renewable resource), medical use (full plant), and food (seeds).

Cessation of exploitation of subsurface rights - oil/gas/coal/uranium extraction, ending eminent domain use for private profit – pipelines and toll roads esp., rebuilding our infrastructure to be centered around multi-generational sustainability of communities, not profit, repeal HB40 (2016) Revise penal code to remove police exemption from being tried for homicide because of subjective “fear for their lives”

DISTRICT 52

Larry Gonzales (R)

No response

Henry Knetsar (L)

No response

DISTRICT 136

Tony Dale (R)

Background: Tony Dale is husband, father, small business owner and US Army veteran with a record of public service to the community.

Education: B.A., The Ohio State University, 1992

Campaign website: www.texansfortonydale.com

Answer 1: I believe that the 2nd Amendment is an individual right and the right to defend oneself is fundamental. The majority of the shooting fatalities in the US are due to suicide. I have a track record of supporting funding for mental health and am committed to ensuring access for our veterans.

Answer 2: Education remains the number one funded item in the budget at over 50% of total. In the 84th Session I supported efforts to reform our system instead of waiting for the court to rule. House leadership is committed to examining all aspects of school funding and I am encouraged that we will make strides to address the system. The funding formulas are too complex and understood by too few. We need to reduce complexity in the system. In addition to appropriate funding we also need to ensure the focus of education funds is on the classroom and not on the expensive education bureaucracy.

Answer 3: The core mission of CPS is to protect children from abuse. All efforts must be focused on that. Leadership must be held accountable for results. The recent termination of regional directors is a start. I support the new mentorship program for case workers to ensure they can handle the job. We must evaluate every manager and leader to make sure the right person is in the right job. High quality foster parents are lacking and we must work with the faith community to increase quality foster homes. We need to provide financial assistance to family members that step up to provide kinship care.

Answer 4: I favor the existing redistricting process.

Answer 5: One reason Texas has a high percentage of uninsured is that Texas has the second largest population of illegal immigrants in the US. It is estimated that about 75% of the 1.5M illegal aliens in Texas are uninsured. As it relates to federal Medicaid and Medicare coverage I urge the federal government to block grant their 60% of cost to the states so that we can determine the most efficient use of those dollars. Fraud, waste and abuse must be addressed. Total improper payments nationwide for federal programs this year may be $139 billion. That rate has doubled since Obamacare was implemented.

Answer 6: Voting is a right and a duty of citizenship. I encourage citizens to cast informed votes and to participate in civic life. If a citizen chooses not to vote, that in itself is a decision. Texas has extensive early voting, election day voting and mail in voting. If someone fails to vote it is not due to a lack of ballot access.

Answer 7: In the upcoming session I plan to address the increasing problem of some teachers who are having inappropriate sexual contact or communication with students. Some school districts are allowing such individuals to transfer from district to district where they reoffend. This is unacceptable. Passing these predators on is harmful to students and damages the reputation of quality teachers and it must be stopped.

Paul R. Gordon (D)


Campaign website: www.gordonfortexas.com

Answer 1: I support the second amendment and responsible gun ownership. I support laws that track large-scale ammunition purchases, ban assault weapons, ban large capacity magazines, and require background and mental health checks of commercial gun sales no matter where sold. I support repeal of campus carry.

Answer 2: I support the Center for Public Policy Priorities April 20, 2016, policy brief, “The Texas School Finance Challenge and
Texas Representatives

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What to Do About It," by Chandra Villanueva: 1) commission an objective, third-party study on the level of funding required to meet the academic standards currently in place; 2) update several elements of the funding formulas, some of which haven’t been adjusted for nearly three decades; 3) bring up funding levels for all districts by increasing the basic allotment; and 4) adjust the basic allotment for inflation and build in periodic reviews.

Answer 3: Lack of funding has hindered CPS in their mission to care for the most vulnerable by monitoring and conducting early intervention. There are too few caseworkers for the many caseloads. Burnout results in a brain drain as workers leave after only a few months of employment. Funds must be provided to hire and retain qualified professionals to reduce caseloads. The system is overwhelmed with children for whom there is no placement. Sleeping in caseworkers’ offices is not the solution. CPS must improve recruitment of foster and adoptive parents. The current level of outreach has been inadequate.

Answer 4: Since most legislators have a vested interest in keeping their positions and party alignments, it is unreasonable to expect an unbiased redistricting process from them. The current districts which often have incredibly awkward geography, do not maintain the interests of the population. Neighbors are often separated and joined with citizens from regions that have widely differing needs and interests. This is why I support a Citizen’s Independent Redistricting Commission at the State Level.

Answer 5: I think it is a travesty that the governors of Texas have refused to use federal dollars to expand Medicaid coverage. I support this method to provide medical services to our most vulnerable citizens. Ultimately we pay, because when they are ill, they use emergency rooms for basic medical needs. Until Medicaid is available, supporting clinics in local communities is a way to reduce emergency room visits. The state currently passes this burden to local communities. Texans who do not qualify for Medicaid but also have too few resources to purchase insurance could also be served by these clinics.

Answer 6: Current voter ID law, touted to reduce fraud, is unconstitutional. Little evidence supports voter fraud, but the law is used to disenfranchise voters by requiring ID that some people have difficulty obtaining. For years a voter registration card was all that was needed to vote in a precinct. Education can help voters understand the importance of voting and how their votes make a difference. Removing barriers to voting is a way to increase voter confidence. I fully support using multiple methods to vote. Mail-in ballots and early voting increase participation and reduce lines on voting day.

Answer 7: Two other issues I consider urgent are protection of water, both its availability and quality, and increasing the availability of public transportation. In Texas we love our vehicles, but many are ready to utilize rail for commuting, I support an option for the I-35 corridor and other heavily traveled routes in Texas to reduce congestion.

District Judges

Question 1: What are the pros and cons of your county’s docket system? Explain how this system does or does not help move cases quickly through the courts thus easing the burden of overcrowded dockets in the District Courts.

Question 2: What are the most pressing problems facing this District court and how do you propose handling these issues?

Question 3: Do you believe any changes in the current election process are needed to improve or maintain impartiality, given the need to raise funds for political campaigns? Please explain.

Question 4: How would you handle a situation where an attorney appearing before your court is inadequately representing his/her client?
**District Judges**

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very efficiently. There is no backlog. In addition to this court, there are two other districts that overlap our county, providing coverage on the bench when there is an illness, vacation or conflict of some type. Going forward, we must stay ahead of the curve and account for future growth in our population and, therefore, in judicial volume. Working closely with the Commissioners Court to assure adequate resources are allocated for the court and associated offices is crucial.

**Answer 2:** Budget problems are always an issue in this county with its limited tax base and with the population growth anticipated in the near future. As is the case across the state, access to the civil justice system for citizens who cannot afford an attorney is a problem. I would encourage the attorneys who practice in my court to participate in pro bono activities to assist those people. The most pressing issue is to elect another judge with a broad background of practice in all areas of law handled by the court, particularly criminal law, which accounts for about 85% of this court’s caseload.

**Answer 3:** I strongly support the public election of judges as it keeps them accountable to the communities that they serve. However, I would prefer to see a non-partisan system of electing judges. The bench is not the place for partisan politics and it is a shame that candidates have to resort to political posturing to get elected. Removing the partisan labels would enable candidates to campaign on their qualifications and not on the letter behind their name. The current restrictions on judicial campaign finance help maintain impartiality. I have never seen partiality to be a problem in our county.

**Answer 4:** This occurs primarily in criminal cases. In our county, roughly 80% of defendants have a court appointed attorney. The judge knows these attorneys and their abilities very well. In 30+ years I have not seen this as a problem, but if I did, I would meet with the attorneys for both sides and see if a substitution of attorney or appointment of co-counsel was warranted. In non-jury civil proceedings the judge has more flexibility to ask questions directly to assure proper presentation of the facts. A judge must be careful not to interfere with what may simply be a matter of trial strategy.

**Andrea “Andi” St. Leger (D)**

**Background:** Board Certified in Family Law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization since 2008, Trained Mediator, “Super Lawyer” since 2012, Licensed since 1999

**Education:** Bachelor of Philosophy from Miami University, J.D. from Valparaiso University School of Law

**Campaign website:** www.andiforjudge.com

**Answer 1:** The following programs assist in moving cases through the District Court: 1) Challenge Court for drug offenders that incorporates rigorous treatment and counseling, 2) pretrial diversion services for misdemeanor cases, and 3) a well-run probation department that helps defendants connect with the services they need to maintain compliance with the terms of their probation. The court could benefit from a pre-trial diversion program for non-violent felony offenders. I am interested in evaluating the different systems in the judicial process to ensure they are effective and efficient.

**Answer 2:** Untreated mental health issues of criminal defendants and parents in family law cases create the most pressing problems for this Court. Our community’s most vulnerable citizens are incarcerated and families are torn apart with children paying the greatest price. Caldwell County does not presently have a collaborative mental health initiative, and could benefit from forming a task force composed of members from the judiciary, law enforcement, mental health field and the community to explore the benefits of comprehensive plan to address the intersection of mental health and the legal system.

**Answer 3:** Although judges are not legislators, judicial candidates are included in the process designed for political candidates. However, we must adhere to the Texas Code of Judicial Conduct and are held to more stringent campaign finance and disclosure rules. Publicly funding judicial campaigns is not favored by voters, and does not serve the candidates well either. Once elected, judges are accountable for their decisions that are in writing, of public record and subject to appeal. If a judge has a personal bias or financial interest in a party or matter, she must recuse herself.

**Answer 4:** In criminal cases, the judge has the moral, ethical and legal obligation to ensure that the accused are being adequately represented. If inadequate representation is occurring in the courtroom, I would be compelled to stop the trial and make appropriate findings.

In family law cases, the judge is responsible for determining the best interest of the child. If an attorney’s representation is hindering my ability to do that, I could appoint a guardian ad litem to gather information outside of the courtroom and present a recommendation regarding the child’s best interest.

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**Bastrop County**

**BASTROP COUNTY COMMISSIONER**

**Question 1:** What are the transportation issues facing your precinct and how do you propose to address them?

**Question 2:** What would you do to improve the quality of life for those living in the most impoverished areas in you district?

**Question 3:** Please explain whether you would favor new campaign finance rules for the County candidates that would include disclosure of contributors and expenses, in searchable online database that is available to the public?

**Question 4:** What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

**PRECINCT 1**

**Melvin (Mel) Hamner (R)**

**Background:** 26 years, Air Force logistics/planning (1988 Logistics Manager of Year), 20 years developing/implementing sales strategies for corporate clients.

**Education:** Community College of the Air Force - A.A. in Traffic Management

**Campaign Web site:** http://electmelhamner.com

**Answer 1:** The current transportation infrastructure is an Ad Hoc of many decades of building small subdivisions with little or no code requirements in the county. I plan to work with local government entities and state agencies to build more enforceable codes and apply them to future subdivision construction. Will also work with the road crew and county engineer to solve existing drainage issues that are the result of the Ad Hoc methods used in the past.

**Answer 2:** This county enjoys it’s rural feel but is destined for explosive growth and we need to get ahead of it. Major problem is that more than 50% of our population works out of the county and takes sales revenue with it. We need to seek more employment within the county and takes sales revenue with it. We need to seek more employment within the county and take advantage of the population growth.

**Answer 3:** There is already a lot of suspicion of the “Good Old Boy” being in control of politics. I support full disclosure. It is time our citizens have peace of mind about their government.

**Answer 4:** We have many unimproved roads which include out dated drainage systems. We need an updated drainage plan and a long term capital improvement plan to address the drainage issue along with the improvement of the road system over the next 5 years.

There are also issues with the affordable housing for our senior citizens who live on Social Security alone. The rent here is normally $750 or higher. Most of our seniors are trying to live on about $800.00 a month. We need to work with the state to get more state assisted vouchers for our seniors.

**Dock Jackson (D)**

**Background:** Former Bastrop City Council Member Current Co. Employee Co. Judge’s/County Clerk’s Offices Over 25 Years w/Cities of Austin/Elgin, Past TML President

**Education:** Bastrop High School Graduate

ACC City Management Academy Graduate

Attended SWTSU and UT Austin as Fine Arts

**Campaign Web site:** http://www.andiforjudge.com

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Arts/English Major and worked for UT @ PAC
Campaign Web Site: http://www.dockjackson.com

Answer 1: The current road/bridge system in Bastrop County is under review due to numerous natural disasters i.e. floods and fires. My plan is to develop an inventory of all the roads in precinct and give them a grade from poor to excellent. Then develop a master plan with priorities and schedule improvements. The plan will be made public so that citizens will know where we are in the process. Ultimately I would like to see a unified road/bridge system in Bastrop County which will help improve the road conditions and improve the flow of traffic that is impeded due to the numerous construction projects.

Answer 2: Economic development and quality of life are issues that are a great concern in Precinct 1. I would like to develop better job opportunities, better housing opportunities and more recreational opportunities for community especially youth & seniors who are in need of them. With the explosive growth in the county we can use incentives to develop the job market and encourage better employment opportunities through training and education. It has been proven that recreational opportunities help youth to lead a more productive and healthy lifestyle and will curb crime in the community.

Answer 3: Currently the Bastrop County Elections Office makes the campaign contributors and expenses public on their website. If additional disclosure is needed I would be in favor of expanding the rules and making it more user friendly.

Answer 4: Road/bridge conditions are the number one issue with residents addressed during campaign. I plan to address them by seeking improvements not only within the county budget but by utilizing other sources of revenue via grants and possibly bonds to make the needed improvements. I plan to elevate the Law Enforcement profile by working with BCISO. I intend to be the bridge between Bastrop Co, Pct. 1 residents, the City of Bastrop and BISD to make the process user friendly by conducting neighborhood meetings to listen to the neighborhood and allowing the governmental entities to work as a team.

PRECINCT 3

Colton Stabeno (R)
Background: Current department head for Bastrop Co. Involved in the recovery of 6 natural disasters that hit Bastrop Co. Hands on road construction experience.
Education: Bachelors of Science degree from Texas A&M University; Elgin High School Graduate
Campaign Web Site: http://www.votecolson.com

Answer 1: With Bastrop County’s population projected to grow exponentially very soon, it is very crucial that infrastructure is addressed now so that we are prepared to handle the increased traffic. If elected, I intend to develop a 5 year road plan that will give residents of Precinct 3 a schedule to which all road work will follow. This plan will be developed and implemented in the most fair and unbiased method possible. With over 50 miles of gravel roads in Precinct 3, there is a lot of work left to do.

Answer 2: Being an active Commissioner who stays engaged with his/her constituents would have the greatest benefit. With instances like this, you have to think outside of the box to find ways to effectively help those folks living in the most impoverished areas, besides the obvious of fixing their roads. Be a point of contact for those seeking help, and be able to direct them in the right direction. If crime rates are high in that area, use your position to persuade law enforcement to increase patrols there. Pass on opportunities of employment to help keep those folks working. So much can be done here.

Answer 3: I think transparency is very important when it comes to government, from a national level all the way down to local government. Any time you can improve on transparency, I am for it. Searchable online databases would provide for an easy way to the public to follow candidates and know how they are spending campaign funds, and to whom those funds are coming from.

Answer 4: There are many, I will narrow it down to a few of the more pressing issues outside of roads and bridges. First, drainage issues are a major concern for Precinct 3. I know of several houses that were flooded due to perceived drainage issues in subdivisions. Drainage studies need to be conducted with grant funds to determine viable solutions to this. Additionally, illegal dumping is a major concern for Precinct 3. The County Commissioner of Precinct 3 is the liaison to Bastrop County’s Environmental and Sanitation department. I feel more attention to this will help clean up Precinct 3.

Mark Meuth (D)
Background: I am a 5th generation Bastrop County Precinct 3 resident. I have 29 years experience with TxDOT in the design and construction of roads and bridges.

Answer 1: The transportation issues facing Precinct 3 are the conditions of the current roads and bridges and assessing how to upgrade and maintain them within budget. That would include prioritizing the county roads that are in the most dire need of upgrading and maintaining and to look for different funding avenues to meet the future growth needs for the transportation system. This would include a Unified Maintenance System consisting of road and bridge maintenance, tree trimming, mowing and litter pickup.

Answer 2: To improve the quality of life in the most impoverished areas, I would hold community meetings and listen to the constituents concerns for their welfare and reach out to the commissioner’s court and other government agencies for grants and other methods of acquiring funds to help solve the problems they are encountering.

Answer 3: I would support new campaign finance rules concerning the disclosures of contributors and expenses that could be available in a searchable online database that is available to the public. This would encourage trust and honesty between the candidates and their constituents. It would also ensure that there would be less ethics violations.

Answer 4: The issues within the precinct that need the most attention are roads and bridges, County growth, and water issues. I would ensure that the roads and bridges are properly maintained within budget. This would include funding a Unified Maintenance System. I would encourage county growth through economic development and tax reductions. I would ensure to fight for our water through local and statewide governments including legislative communications.

BASTROP COUNTY SHERIFF

Question 1: Please explain your plan for deportation of undocumented persons?
Maurice Cook (R)
Background: USAF, City Police, Tx DPS, Highway Patrol, Texas Rangers-Chief, Professor-Attorney-Expert Witness, Proven Leader, Budget Manager
Education: Associates, Bachelors, Masters, Juris Doctor Degrees-FBI National Academy- Police Staff Command-Secret Service Dignitary School- DPS 16 Week Academy
Campaign website: http://votecookforsheriff.com

Answer 1: I have found no statutory authority for a Sheriff to deport anyone. The actual deportation of undocumented persons undergoes a complicated federal legal process. However, I would cooperate with the federal authorities within my duties as Sheriff to enforce the law regarding immigration issues.

Answer 2: Cooperation at all levels of government and with the residents of Bastrop County will be one of my top priorities. Being visible and engaged builds positive relationships and community trust; I have already started to move forward on this priority. I have attended city and county government forums and engaged many of the public leaders. I have also been visible in the community participating in public events and organizing meet and greet town hall type events to engage the public.

Answer 3: Many of the activities of Community Policing are geared toward improving race relations. As an educator I have been trained in and have taught Community Policing Concepts which I support and will fully implement to improve community relations. Having a diverse work force is very effective in establishing a positive effect on race relations and I plan...
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Bastrop County

to have a diverse department.

Answer 4: Without question, there are many mental ill persons in our county jail. Care for the mentally ill in our correctional facilities creates challenges for the correctional administrators due to budget restraints and the primary mission of a jail correctional facility which is to maintain a safe confinement environment. The Sheriff doesn’t have the judicial discretion to release anyone placed in jail by court order. What the Sheriff can do is identify and recognize the mentally ill, then provide for the best medical care while they are in the county jail.

Answer 5: Since I’m not currently with the Sheriff’s Department and able to evaluate firsthand the issues facing the Department a specific response would be ill-informed and irresponsible. In general, there are those issues of priority designed to make Bastrop County a safe place to live, work, and raise our families. Specifically, public concerns seems to focus on the expectation of aggressive enforcement of illegal drug trafficking and crimes which invade a person’s home and property: I will be responsive to their concerns.

Mike Renck (D)

Background: Bastrop Co Sheriff’s Office, US Dept of Justice, BOP - Retired, Law Enforcement and Security Academy Instructor, NRA Certified Firearms Instructor

Education: BS in Education - Texas State, Post-grad Education Administration and Criminal Justice - Texas State, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center Graduate

Campaign website: http://www.mikerenckforsheriff.com

Answer 1: Deportation of undocumented persons is the responsibility of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), not the sheriff. The job of identifying, apprehending, detaining and deporting undocumented persons lies with ICE’s Enforcement and Removal Operations. If sheriff’s deputies arrest an undocumented person, ICE will be notified. After serving his or her sentence, that person will be released into the custody of ICE.

Answer 2: I have created 30 and 90-day action plans. These include plans to establish a good working relationship with elected officials and community leaders by meeting with them in the first month to identify issues and concerns. I will meet with them regularly after that. I will hold a town hall meeting within 90 days to listen to the concerns of the public. I will provide opportunity for the public to interact with the sheriff’s office through such things as citizen posse, citizen safety classes, and an advisory council made up of people with diverse backgrounds to discuss problems and solutions.

Answer 3: My campaign motto is “Justice for All.” All personnel will keep that motto at top-of-mind at all times as part of their job performance. Training will be crucial. Sensitivity and inter-personal communications training will help prevent potentially volatile situations from escalating. Staff will be trained how to de-escalate threatening situations without resorting to force. When force is necessary, the least aggressive method will be used. I will have a workforce that reflects the diversity of the county population. My advisory council also will include members of the minority communities.

Answer 4: Every officer, patrol and corrections, will receive training on how to recognize and deal with persons who are, or appear to be, mentally ill. We will work closely with area mental health providers to make every effort to get these persons the help they need instead of putting them in jail, when the situation warrants it. I will include a local mental health professional on my volunteer citizens’ advisory council.

Answer 5: Population growth will require efficient management to ensure public safety and security. Deputies will spend more time on the rural roads and in neighborhoods. Active, visible officers deter crime. To keep patrol deputies in the field, corrections officers will take custody of prisoners at the arrest site and transport them to jail. Child-abuse cases are growing with the population. Detectives will receive training to speed cases to trial. We will sponsor classes to help residents reduce the chances of becoming victims, including firearms safety, home security, and self-defense for women.

BASTROP COUNTY CONSTABLE

Question 1: What do you think are the most important responsibilities of the County Constable’s office?

Answer 2: The most important responsibility of the office is to protect the community and its property. This includes all aspects of law enforcement and assisting other agencies during emergencies.

Answer 3: Constables are required to perform all of these duties with good morals and ethics. Operating within the law and treating everyone fair and just will minimize conflict between the office and the public.

Answer 4: I think the growth of the Cedar Creek as well as the surrounding area is going to challenge the public services in the future. I will make sure the Constable’s Office is available to assist the County Commissioners as well as the Sheriff’s Office with anything that will help keep the community safe.

Answer 5: A Bastrop County Constable should meet all requirements set forth by the Texas Commission On Law Enforcement (TCOLE). I also believe the Constable should have recent law enforcement experience in the community he will be serving, as well as a good working knowledge of the area and the people who live there.

August “Gus” Meduna Jr. (D)

Background: 17 years Precinct 2, Constable; lifelong resident Bastrop County; Property owner; Cattle raiser; Vietnam era Veteran; community/veteran participant.

Education: Smithville High; AAS degree Air University Community College; 1,377 hours constable/law enforcement training, Texas Commission on Law Enforcement.

Answer 1: A major duty is to serve as bailiff of the JP Court to keep peace and ensure the safety of the court. A second key duty is serve warrants and civil papers, including subpoenas, temporary restraining orders, child-support papers, eviction notices, and processes relating to seizure of personal property. It is crucial that this duty is performed properly and in a timely manner to prevent personal and county liability. A third responsibility is to serve as a peace officer to protect people and property. This includes all aspects of law enforcement and assisting other agencies during emergencies.

Answer 2: Population growth will increase the workload and place more demands on the county treasury. It will require experience to do the job of constable effectively. I will be able to manage any increase because of my extensive training, experience and techniques I have developed during my 17 years as Precinct 2 constable. A few years ago I served as constable for three precincts for several months when two constables left office. I was able to handle that added workload. I also know how to stay within budget and I have consistently returned the majority of budgeted discretionary funds to the county.

Answer 3: Constables are required to have a good working knowledge of the area and the community he will be serving, as well as a good working knowledge of the area and the people who live there.

Answer 4: Every officer, patrol and corrections, will receive training on how to recognize and deal with persons who are, or appear to be, mentally ill. We will work closely with area mental health providers to make every effort to get these persons the help they need instead of putting them in jail, when the situation warrants it. I will include a local mental health professional on my volunteer citizens’ advisory council.

Answer 5: Population growth will require efficient management to ensure public safety and security. Deputies will spend more time on the rural roads and in neighborhoods. Active, visible officers deter crime. To keep patrol deputies in the field, corrections officers will take custody of prisoners at the arrest site and transport them to jail. Child-abuse cases are growing with the population. Detectives will receive training to speed cases to trial. We will sponsor classes to help residents reduce the chances of becoming victims, including firearms safety, home security, and self-defense for women.

Tim Sparsman (R)

Background: 16 years service at Bastrop County Sheriff’s Office. Patrol, Narcotics, and criminal investigations, Husband and Dad

Education: Graduate of Bastrop High, US Coast Guard Vet, Master Peace Officer

Campaign website: http://ttsparsman@yahoo.com

Answer 1: The Office of Constable Pct#3 in Bastrop County is a law enforcement agency that deals with court issued documents issued by the Justice of the Peace and other agencies. The most important responsibility of the office is to perform all of these duties with good morals and ethics. Operating within the law and treating everyone fair and just will minimize conflict between the office and the public.

Tom Peters (R)

Background: Retired law enforcement officer from the Austin Police Department with extensive experience in law enforcement.

Campaign website: www.tom-peters.com

Answer 1: The most important responsibility of the office is to protect the community and its property. This includes all aspects of law enforcement and assisting other agencies during emergencies.

Answer 2: Population growth will increase the workload and place more demands on the county treasury. It will require experience to do the job of constable effectively. I will be able to manage any increase because of my extensive training, experience and techniques I have developed during my 17 years as Precinct 2 constable. A few years ago I served as constable for three precincts for several months when two constables left office. I was able to handle that added workload. I also know how to stay within budget and I have consistently returned the majority of budgeted discretionary funds to the county.

Answer 3: Constables are required to have a good working knowledge of the area and the community he will be serving, as well as a good working knowledge of the area and the people who live there.

Answer 4: Every officer, patrol and corrections, will receive training on how to recognize and deal with persons who are, or appear to be, mentally ill. We will work closely with area mental health providers to make every effort to get these persons the help they need instead of putting them in jail, when the situation warrants it. I will include a local mental health professional on my volunteer citizens’ advisory council.

Answer 5: Population growth will require efficient management to ensure public safety and security. Deputies will spend more time on the rural roads and in neighborhoods. Active, visible officers deter crime. To keep patrol deputies in the field, corrections officers will take custody of prisoners at the arrest site and transport them to jail. Child-abuse cases are growing with the population. Detectives will receive training to speed cases to trial. We will sponsor classes to help residents reduce the chances of becoming victims, including firearms safety, home security, and self-defense for women.

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BASTROP COUNTY CONSTABLE

Question 1: What do you think are the most important responsibilities of the County Constable’s office?

Answer 2: The most important responsibility of the office is to protect the community and its property. This includes all aspects of law enforcement and assisting other agencies during emergencies.

Answer 3: Constables are required to have a good working knowledge of the area and the community he will be serving, as well as a good working knowledge of the area and the people who live there.

Answer 4: Every officer, patrol and corrections, will receive training on how to recognize and deal with persons who are, or appear to be, mentally ill. We will work closely with area mental health providers to make every effort to get these persons the help they need instead of putting them in jail, when the situation warrants it. I will include a local mental health professional on my volunteer citizens’ advisory council.

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Bastrop County

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Education: Bachelor’s degree from St. Edwards University in Criminal Justice, Master’s Peace Officer Certification and Police instructor certification.

Answer 1: Constable’s law enforcement roles vary widely, but in general their police powers are no different from those of other peace officers in the state. Constables primarily process and execute civil process from various courts, execute misdemeanor traffic, hot check warrants of arrest and may also be involved in truancy programs. In short, Constables have the same authority as any police officer or Sheriff’s deputy.

Answer 2: In the last 5 years the population in Bastrop County has grown by 14%. This has resulted in increased crime, traffic and a need for critical planning for continued growth in our infrastructure. The constable’s office is one more public servant in the field to monitor crime, assist in traffic control and assess other areas of concern. A close working relationship with the County Commissioner, the Sheriff’s office and other county officials, would be an essential part of my personal mission. I plan to be visible in precinct 3 and make myself available in a positive way to the citizens of Bastrop.

Answer 3: In these extraordinary times, law enforcement is under extreme scrutiny. We must work hard to regain the trust and respect of our citizens. Everyone has a right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect. A qualified candidate must have the educational background, experience and maturity to represent and demonstrate the authority of the office he holds; for the good of all citizens and our community. Bastrop County will continue to evolve as technology and science expands. At a minimum, 5 years experience as a police officer, a college degree, and supervisory/administrative experience.

Caldwell County

Caldwell County Commissioner

Question 1: What are the transportation issues facing your precinct and how do you propose to address them?

Question 2: What would you do to improve the quality of life for those living in the most impoverished areas in your district?

Question 3: Please explain whether you would favor new campaign finance rules for the County candidates that would include disclosure of contributors and expenses, in searchable online database that is available to the public?

Question 4: What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

PRECINCT 1

Hoppy Haden (R)
Background: 20 years of residential and commercial construction and 32 years in the environmental laboratory and consulting industry.
Education: Degree in Physical Science
Answer 1: Our county continues to struggle with road maintenance. We need a 2 and 5 year plan based on road usage so that we can accrue funds to address specific projects in the county.
We seem to be “greasing the wheel that squeaks the loudest” currently.
It is also important to work with economic development entities such as the Greater San Marcos Partnership to attract businesses to our county to increase the tax base in order to pay for these projects.

Answer 2: It is a documented fact that our county is faced with large amount of people living below the poverty level. We have to work diligently to attract business to our county that will provide better paying jobs for the people currently living below the poverty level.
Attracting more business has the added benefit of increasing the tax base in our county which will also allow the county to provide more and better services to the people currently living below the poverty level.

Answer 3: I would have no problem with new campaign finance rules for County candidates requiring disclosure of contributors and expenses, in searchable online database available to the public.
Candidates currently are required to turn in campaign finance reports in a paper format to the election office. Currently people have to go to the election office to retrieve copies of these reports.

Answer 4: Our county continues to struggle with funding for roads, county employee compensation and insurance, funding of equipment such as ambulances and road equipment and funding for public assistance.
We need 2, 5 and 10 year planning that actively pursues attraction of business and quality housing for our county which will increase the tax base funding for issues above. Two years ago the county agreed to fund half of the cost for two ambulances. We did not have the funding when the time came to honor our agreement. Planning would have allowed for accrual of the funds for these equipment items.

Alfredo R. Munoz (D)
No response

PRECINCT 3

Edward ‘Ed’ Theriot (R)
Background: 29 total years of experience in the area of government administration specializing in land use planning, permitting, and development.
Education: BA, Geography / Urban and Regional Planning, Texas State University, 1986 (SWTSU at the time)
Answer 1: The condition and maintenance of the Caldwell County road system is one of the biggest issues facing the County today. The cost necessary to bring these facilities to at least a minimum standard needs to be identified and the complete range of funding options brought before the public and the Commissioners Court. With the public input and the assistance of all available resources, I believe we can begin to address this important issue.

Answer 2: Caldwell County is by no description a wealthy County. We have a median household income that is over 15% below the State average. Almost 20% of our residents are at or below the national poverty level. We have a host of issues ranging from affordability and quality of housing to availability of healthcare. I believe that an advisory committee should be formed to coordinate and present recommendations to the Court on these important County issues.

Answer 3: Yes. I am in favor of all reasonable efforts to increase transparency and full disclosure of campaign contributors and expenses. Candidates are currently required to file periodic finance reports and I would favor that these reports be available for viewing on the appropriate websites.

Answer 4: Important issues facing the County and Precinct three include: 1. Improve fiscal planning and management. Caldwell County is facing severe budget shortfalls due to poor fiscal planning, bad financial decisions, and lack of proper controls and procedures.
2. Resolution and mitigation of issues relating to the heavy recreational use of the San Marcos River. The County resources and the quality of life of many County residents are being negatively affected by the largely uncontrolled use of the San Marcos River.
3. Improve planning for road improvements and maintenance.

Neto Madrigal (D)
Background: I’ve been a resident of Caldwell County since 1986. I have raised 3 children here. My wife is a teacher and I have been a Commissioner for 12 years.
Education: I attended Southwest Texas State University in San Marco from 1973 to 1978.

Answer 1: Due to growth in Caldwell County, we are experiencing more traffic, especially on our major state highways, such as Highway 21, Highway 80, and numerous Farm to Market roads. Myself and TxDOT have been working on these issues by conducting safety and traffic count studies. Currently, an organization, CAMPO, is working on a transportation plan to be completed in 2040, which will provide assistance to our roads.

Answer 2: Caldwell County is predominately a farm community. The Commissioners Court continuously looks for opportunities to assist farmers during difficult times, caused by droughts and floods. Also, we are working with our neighboring counties, and other resources to bring employment into the community.

Answer 3: The more transparency there is available, the more informed voters can be. There is nothing better than the open door
Caldwell County

Caldwell County Sheriff

Question 1: Please explain your plan for deportation of undocumented persons?

Answer 1: As Sheriff my job is to enforce the law and any undocumented persons that are arrested will have their information sent to ICE for further processing once their case has been finalized locally.

Question 2: What are your proposals for tackling challenges such as enhancing collaboration among the Sheriff’s Office, the City Council, the County Commissioners, and the community?

Answer 2: The Sheriff’s office will establish an open door policy and a line of communication between the community and this department as well as other agencies. We will work with the commissioner’s to build a relationship that will benefit and serve the citizens of Caldwell County.

Question 3: Please explain how you think the Sheriff’s Office can contribute to improving race relations?

Answer 3: The Sheriff’s office and it’s employees will treat everyone with dignity and respect. Race; Gender; Nationality or social status will not play a role in how we interact with you regardless if an offense may or may not have been committed. This departments duties and responsibilities are to the community and to be available at any given time to address issues that may arise. Through transparency and an open dialog with the citizens we will work to build a safer place to live and raise a family.

Question 4: Many mentally ill persons are in jail instead of treatment. How do you propose to remedy this situation?

Answer 4: In todays society mental illness is more prevalent thus requiring additional training for officers to be able to recognize when they are dealing with persons who may have a mental illness. We will have specially trained officers as a back up to assist those in that situation and readily available. There will also be a qualified medical staff on board and we will work to accomplish the required task placed on the Modern Constable. The Constable should be Proficient in Civil and Criminal laws that they can be an instructor in both Fields. Have at least 15 years of both Law Enforcement and Civil law enforcement experience. Exhibit good management Knowledge of Budget, Training, Supervision of Deputies and meeting the needs of the Public that elected them Constable.

Question 5: What issues within your County need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

Answer 5: No response

Ray Chandler (R)

Background: Police officer since 1987 to present

Education: Some college

Answer 1: As Sheriff my job is to enforce all the laws impartially. Every person will be treated equally according to the law regardless of Race; Nationality; or social standings. We will enforce the law and any undocumented persons that are arrested will have their information sent to ICE for further processing once their case has been finalized locally.

Answer 2: The Sheriff’s office will establish an open door policy and a line of communication between the community and this department as well as other agencies. We will work with the commissioner’s to build a relationship that will benefit and serve the citizens of Caldwell County.

Answer 3: The Sheriff’s office and it’s employees will treat everyone with dignity and respect. Race; Gender; Nationality or social status will not play a role in how we interact with you regardless if an offense may or may not have been committed. This departments duties and responsibilities are to the community and to be available at any given time to address issues that may arise. Through transparency and an open dialog with the citizens we will work to build a safer place to live and raise a family.

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Daniel C. Law (D)

No response

Victor “Smitty” Terrell (D)

Unopposed

Tom Will (R)

Background: Civil/Detective Harris County Sheriff Office

26 years Harris County Constables Office Patrol Sargent/Writ Deputy

Education: High School, Advance TCOLE Certification, TCOLE Licensed Instructor

Answer 1: The Constables Office is responsible for executing the Civil, Writ and Warrants issued out of the Justice of the Peace Office, Serve as his Bailiff for the Justice of the Peace, during open Court proceedings. Execute or Serve any other Civil papers, Writs, received from any other Courts, or Attorney issued to his Office. It is also important for him to serve the People that elect him to Office, by meeting their Law Enforcement needs in the County, whether that be addressing a traffic or Criminal Crime problem in the Precinct or addressing emergency needs during Weather or assisting Fire Depts.

Answer 2: Since the County is experiencing a Growth Spurt, more civil papers will increase, calls for Service in the Precinct will increase. I will add and Supervise Deputies that will be well qualified to execute the position of Deputy. I will work to increase income for the Office through illegal asset seizures. I will strive to get better equipment, add Deputies, add Precinct wide Patrols. I will make sure the Patrol vehicles are equipped with the proper equipment to assist the Deputy in what is needed at a crime scene or Medical emergency until an ambulance arrives.

Answer 3: Since the needs of a Constables Office have changed in the last 20 year from a elected “Status Position” to a working Office requiring many talents

Richard Callihan (D)

Background: Lifelong resident Caldwell Co.

Luling Police Dept. as: patrol sgt, field training officer, crime scene and criminal Investigator, asst. police chief

Education: Basic, Intermediate,

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policy.

Answer 4: The issues of traffic, safety, equipment for our emergency personal, the growth on the San Marcos River, and more job opportunities are needing attention. Commissioners Court continuously works together and seeks assistance from our State Senator, Congressman, and the State Representative to help find solutions on these concerns.

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Caldwell County

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Advanced, Master certification for a peace officer through Texas Commission on Law Enforcement.

Answer 1: The mandated duties of the constable are to serve Civil Process and Civil Court orders for the Justice of the Peace, County, and District Court. The constable must also serve as Bailiff for the Justice of the Peace of the precinct. Civil law is often more technical than criminal law, requiring additional training at specialized schools with an emphasis on civil law. The Constable will enforce all state and local law in the county. The constable has identical powers of arrest of any law enforcement agency in the state of Texas. Continuing education and training is required by TCOLE.

Answer 2: The precinct in which I serve is the largest in Caldwell County. The population of Caldwell County is increasing and along with that increase of people more situations will possibly occur that will require a knowledgeable and experienced constable, because of the various civil issues that regular law enforcement is not trained to handle. Because of the new developments, being familiar with the people and area will enhance the effectiveness of the Constable. New laws are being enacted by the legislature that required new training. I will keep current of these changes.

Answer 3: Currently, the minimum requirement is to be certified by Texas Commission on Law Enforcement as a peace officer which involves 40 hours of civil process along with basic criminal law. This has to be updated every two years. There is also a mandated civil process school that is required by the state in order to serve civil papers. Continuing education is necessary in order to serve the citizens of the county in a lawful manner.

Answer 4: How do you plan to address it?

Answer 1: I can see a problem developing in Caldwell County with the Road ways, as the current Constable I receive many calls for traffic issue and my goals are to advance our department in traffic enforcement in the precinct to ensure the safety of the public as the population grows I would like to increase the man power of the office to handle the increased traffic issues of our county and precinct.

Answer 3: I strangely believe that someone who is interested in the position of Constable should have at least 5 years prior Law Enforcement, and have worked for a County Constable office for four years of service. And 3-5 years of some type of leadership training or work related training.

PRECINCT 3

John Telles (R)

No response

Michael Jay Bell (D)

Background: In law enforcement for 8 years, I started as deputy constable for Caldwell County Pct #4 in 2008, appointed to Constable Pct #3 in January 2016.

Education: Attended San Antonio College in 2007 for the Basic Peace Officer program to obtain my license. Currently hold Advance Peace Officer License with TCOLE

Campaign website: http://None

Answer 1: The most important thing is availability to the public, and to always make sure the the public is served at the best of your ability. When enforcement takes place on the public on a day to day basis always treat the public with courtesy and respect.

Answer 2: I can see a problem developing in Caldwell County with the Road ways, as the current Constable I receive many calls for traffic issue and my goals are to advance our department in traffic enforcement in the precinct to ensure the safety of the public as the population grows I would like to increase the man power of the office to handle the increased traffic issues of our county and precinct.

Answer 3: I strangely believe that someone who is interested in the position of Constable should have at least 5 years prior Law Enforcement, and have worked for a County Constable office for four years of service. And 3-5 years of some type of leadership training or work related training.

Hays County

BOND PROPOSITION 1

“The issuance of bonds in the amount of $106,400,000.00 To pay for constructing, reconstructing, improving, and equipping public safety facilities, being a co-located emergency communications/911 facility, a law enforcement center, a law enforcement training facility, and a county jail facility; and the levying of a tax in payment thereof”

PROPOSITION 2

“No response

“The issuance of bonds in the amount of $131,400,000.00 To pay for constructing and improving sections of county roads and/or state highways, drainage improvements, environmental mitigation and conservation, pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation improvements relating to these roads and highways, low water crossing improvements, traffic safety and operational improvements, and road improvements, specifically to include but not limited to, the improvement of Dacy Lane, Buda Truck bypass, Old Bastrop Highway, Centerpoint Road, Mccarty Lane, Hillside Terrace, Lime Klin Road, Winters Mill Parkway, Fischer Store Road At FM 2325, Darden Hill Road, FM2001, Center Street mobility improvements related to Union Pacific switching line, FM150, SH21, SH80, FM110, FM621, FM967, FM3237, US290 (including the intersections of Holder Lane, Martin Road, Trautwein Road and Henly Loop); and the levying of a tax in payment thereof”

COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 1

Debbie Gonzales Ingalsbe (D)

Unopposed

COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 3

Will Conley (R)

Unopposed

TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR

Luanne Caraway (R)

Unopposed

HAYS TRINITY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD DIRECTOR, DISTRICT 2

Ron Crane

No response

Greg Nesbitt

No response
**HAYS COUNTY SHERIFF**

**Question 1:** Please explain your plan for deportation of undocumented persons?
**Question 2:** What are your proposals for tackling challenges such as enhancing collaboration among the Sheriff’s Office, the City Council, the County Commissioners, and the community?
**Question 3:** Please explain how you think the Sheriff’s Office can contribute to improving race relations?
**Question 4:** What issues within your County need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

**Gary Cutler (R)**

**Education:** Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas, Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, May 1973, TCOLE-Masters and Instructors Certificates

**Experience:** TX Alcoholic Beverage Commission 2004-2010, Williamson County Sheriff’s Office 2001-2004, Travis County Sheriff’s Office 1974-2000 (Retired)

**Website:** www.cutlerforsheriff.com

**Answer 1:** Our role is to support ICE and assist them in accomplishing their federal mandates. Typically, our inmate population does not regularly meet ICE criteria; therefore, I do not see any changes in the immediate future. This being said, I will stay fluid and make changes only if warranted.

**Answer 2:** Throughout my tenure as the Hays County Sheriff, it has always been a priority to collaborate with our citizens, the Commissioners’ Court, and any other entity to the best of my ability. I will maintain this priority by creating and enhancing our partnerships to address future challenges that our unprecedented growth has and will continue to produce throughout Hays County.

**Answer 3:** While we are aware of the volatile relationship on a national level, we have not experienced any of these issues in Hays County. During the past six years as Sheriff my agency has enjoyed a positive partnership with the citizens of our diverse community. My office as a whole receives far more compliments than complaints from the public we serve.

**Answer 4:** Our most pressing issue is our inability to house all of our inmates within the existing Hays County Jail Facility. We are managing an average daily population that far exceeds our current capacity which forces us to house inmates in as many as seven additional county jails in order to maintain compliance with the Texas Commission on Jail Standards. Working closely with Commissioners’ Court has resulted in a proposition being placed on the upcoming November ballot to expand and renovate the current jail facility in order to address this issue.

**Rodrigo Amaya (D)**

**Education:** Associate of Criminal Justice at Texas State

**Experience:** Over 15 years experience in Law

**Answer 1:** The Sheriff’s role in the deportation of undocumented persons begins when his/her deputies arrest a person for a criminal violation who happens to be undocumented. ICE is notified and may possibly put a detainer/hold on the immigrant. A detainer /hold is usually placed on an immigrant who has a criminal record in the US or Mexico and is among the more dangerous and violent immigrants. After the local authorities are done with the immigrant who has a Detainer/Hold put on them, ICE will come and pick them up and the role of the Sheriff is complete.

**Answer 2:** The word communication comes to mind. It is a necessary component for the success of collaboration with all involved. To enhance this effort, I will reach out to our other local law enforcement agencies, treating them as equals working together for the safety of our citizens. I will work with our county commissioners, city council, as well as our judges and district attorney, I will bring the issues and the will of our citizen’s, respectfully, to them with the fortitude and professionalism that I bring to my office as the Hays County Sheriff. To our community I am the keeper of the peace.

**Answer 3:** No one in my office as my employee will exhibit racism, or any other form of hatred, bias or discrimination. It will not be tolerated. I will have extensive training and policies to educate all employees on this topic. I will strive to implement programs and training for our leaders within our agency to be proactive in recognizing negative qualities or deteriorating attitudes and performances of my employees. I will provide corrective training to ensure professional employees. We will show empathy and respect for our citizen’s cultural diversities and beliefs.

**Answer 4:**
1) Availability of the Sheriff and the Chief Deputy–myself and my chief will both reside in Hays County to be available 24/7 with a zero response time. At no time will you find your county without the presence of the Sheriff and then have to wait for your second in command to drive from his residence two counties away.
2) Transparency-accountability Fiscally responsible - careful consideration and educated decisions will be explored before spending tax payer’s money. Restructuring the relationships between the officers and our diverse public.

**HAYS COUNTY CONSTABLE**

**Question 1:** What do you think are the most important responsibilities of the County Constable’s office?
**Question 2:** What emerging problems do you foresee in the Constable’s office and how will you address them?
**Question 3:** What should be the minimum qualifications for the position of Constable?

**Saul Medrano (R)**

**Education:** Bachelor of Criminal Justice - University of Texas at Arlington

**Experience:** Master Peace Officer; Civil Process Proficiency; Law Enforcement Instructor Former Jail Administrator & Chief Deputy Constable and Bilingual Spanish

**Website:** www.saulmedrano.us

**Answer 1:** Constables are officially tasked with the execution of civil & criminal process, bailiff duties for their Justice Court. Art. 2.12, TX CCP indicates that Constables are licensed Peace Officers w/full powers of arrest, search, & seizure as all peace officers. I find the most important duties of the office is to provide professional, & timely service in the area of civil process & supplementing the services of existing “first responder” LE agencies, primarily within the designated precinct - extending to county-wide operations when necessary; ultimately concerned with the safety of the citizens.

**Answer 2:** It is imperative to monitor the evolving characteristics of the demographics both collectively & individually w/respect to the cultural diversity of the community. Changes often necessitate modifying a response in both L.E. & Civil services provided, as well as the manner of service. Excessive turnover, as seen, decreases the overall efficiency of the agency & contributes to more cost. Each employee who is terminated/resigns costs the county money. The constant awareness of changes ahead & Retention of employees, with training, team building & counseling will be of high priority & implemented

**Answer 3:** I personally believe that there must be a proportionate balance of education & experience to effectively & efficiently fulfill the duties of Constable. At least an undergraduate degree w/ a major in CJ; a social science major with a minor in CJ; or public administration; if that candidate has not yet attained a Master Peace Officer certification status by Texas Commission on L.E. If the candidate has the time and experience to attain a Master-Officer Status, then the current standards are fine. See requirement link-TXSOS: www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/candidates/guide/qualifications.shtml#g

**David Peterson (D)**

**Education:** I graduated from San Marcos High, certified by the Texas Municipal Police Assn, over 2000 hrs of instruction and have a Master Peace Officer license.

**Experience:** Hays Co Deputy for 19 yrs, serving in various divisions, Constable for 9 yrs, and a Master Peace Officer for 9 yrs.

**Answer 1:** The most important responsibilities are to have a properly trained constable staff to ensure an efficient and productive office and the best customer service in providing civil process, enforcing the law, educating citizens on crime prevention and safety, and working with other law enforcement agencies in our community and surrounding counties. To provide Bailiffs for both Justice of the Peace courts and all other courts as needed and to be involved in serving the community by volunteering time to various organizations in order to meet their goals.

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Answer 2: I foresee an increase in the amount of work. This is the largest precinct in Hays County and services two Justice of the Peace courts and other levels of the justice system. The increase in the population in one of the fastest growing counties and at Texas State University also raises concerns. It will require a need for updated equipment and additional personnel. These issues will need to be addressed by working closely with our Commissioners Court.

Answer 3: I am fine with the current qualifications set forth in law even though some may be stringent. I would like to see some civil experience as well as knowledge and experience in a law enforcement management position be included along with these qualifications.

CONSTABLE PRECINCT 2

James H. Kohler (R)
Experience: 38 years
Answer 1: The most important responsibility of the County Constable’s office is to take care of the people of the County and the precinct.
Answer 2: Population growth! If people would just stop moving in! We’re getting another officer on January 1, 2017. That should help!
Answer 3: The minimum qualification is to be certified.

Michael Torres (D)
Education: Basic Peace Officer
Certification received from South West Texas Junior College, Advanced Peace Officer License issued by TCOLE.
Experience: 15 Years as a Licensed Peace Officer, serving the citizens of Kyle for the last five years working with the Kyle Police Department.
Website: torres4constablepct2.com

Answer 1: The Constable is responsible for the execution of all process issued by the Justice of the peace. The Constable should not be limited to this as the position is that of a Licensed Peace Officer and has the authority and responsibility to address any civil and criminal issue, the citizens of Precinct 2 and Hays County may encounter.
Answer 2: In recent years as a citizen of Hays County and working in the community, the Constables Office and Deputies do not have a good working relationship with Other Agencies. I will address this by setting up meetings with Department Heads and inform them that my Deputies will provide assistance when requested and they will be expected to handle and take necessary Law Enforcement action necessary to meet the powers they have been given by the State of Texas.

Answer 3: The Constable should be a licensed peace officer and served as such for a minimum of five years.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

Question 1: What are the funding needs of the office of Justice of the Peace?
Question 2: How can the service in your district be improved?

PRECINCT 1, PLACE 1

Sylvia Deleon Muzzy (R)
Education: Graduate of San Marcos High School and Graduate of Texas State University with a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences
Experience: Working with youth and families within Hays County Juvenile Probation, San Marcos High School, and currently as a Juvenile Caseworker
Website: www.sylviamuzzy.com
Answer 1: Money allocated to address the funding needs of the office comes directly from the pockets of citizens. This basic understanding guides the budget in serving the community. Currently, the funding needs for the office are being met. As a department leader, I will increase performance and effectiveness of the court within the current budget. An example of this would be improving office efficiency by encouraging staff participation in the free trainings that Hays County currently provides its employees.
Answer 2: Service will begin to improve when there is a fundamental change in the culture. There must be a shift from a culture of mere compliance to one of continuous improvement. A Justice of the Peace should use the office to bridge gaps between schools and courts, build partnerships with our local university, collaborate with city leaders, and create a safe and healthy environment for citizens. My experience working within the Justice of the Peace court system, the Juvenile Probation Department, and the San Marcos School District provides me the tools to foster and maintain these relationships.

JoAnne Prado (D)
Education: San Marcos High School graduate
Experience: 32 years with Hays County working with the judicial system 12 of those years as Justice of the Peace
Answer 1: At this time this office has been responsible for JP 1-1 and JP 1-2 and both courts are in complete compliance with all state mandated requirements and have now passed the state audit conducted recently by the state. This is a huge accomplishment and reflects on the type service we are providing for this community and in particular precinct 1. I plan to work closely with the JP 1-2 judge so that we may continue with this service as we move forward as separate courts.

WIMBERLEY ISD SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Question 1: Fees for participation in extracurricular activities have increased substantially, limiting some student participation. What measures would you support to ensure the accessibility of extracurricular activities for all students in WISD?
Question 2: Given state cuts to education and increased costs (employee healthcare, salaries, energy) what should be WISD’s budget approach and how/where does the district find funding to meet identified needs?
Question 3: What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions for the identified issues will you pursue?

PLACE 4

Tina Pennington
Unopposed

PLACE 5

Erika Koenig
Education: University of St. Thomas - undergraduate in business and Spanish and graduate studies in education
Experience: Owner of the HippoCampus Learning Center, dual language teacher for Houston ISD, training coordinator for Rock Bottom Restaurants
Website: www.hippoclc.com
Answer 1: The first step would be to reevaluate how the monies are spent and determine if there are areas in which fees can be reduced without sacrificing the

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purpose or integrity of the program. This does not mean that the school board should micromanage each specific organization, but it is important to review to ensure maximum effectiveness in spending. Also, every child deserves to be a part of something, for we know, and research supports, the academic, emotional, and societal benefits of such. Creating a marketing and/or sponsorship committee would be one way to open the door to some students.

Answer 2: During economic downturns, budgetary concerns present some serious situations, which usually come in the form of reducing or eliminating funds somewhere on the campuses. Indirectly, this action affects the students and their educational process and could change the quality of instruction and add undue stress to the employees. Reviewing budgets, line by line, is the primary approach to find funding to meet identified needs, but clearly understanding the situation is essential. I propose that forums be held to listen to the staff of WISD and students to determine what the primary needs first.

Answer 3: Those issues are state testing, special education, and the increasing use of drugs and alcohol with our students. The first issue has a various complexities, which requires longitudinal planning and objective cooperation prior to any changes being addressed. The second is a growing population that needs a current and appropriate curriculum plan in order to provide an effective education. The third must have a multifaceted approach, starting with the inclusion of the students and parents. The social and emotional development of students can be addressed at school with the right curriculum.

Joe Malone
Education: Wheaton College (IL), B.A. Loyola University Chicago School of Law, J.D.
Experience: Served as a Trustee on the Wimberley I.S.D. School Board since 2013 and Current Director and Past President of Wimberley Education Foundation

Answer 1: I believe that extracurricular activity participation is one of our greatest strengths at Wimberley I.S.D. All of our students should have the ability to participate in our extracurricular activities regardless of their ability to pay fees. Our athletic fee was recently discussed at a school board meeting. When our board inquired as to whether our athletic fee resulted in any of our students not being able to participate, we were assured that it did not. If a student presents a hardship to our administrators, options exist to prevent this from being a hurdle to student participation.

Answer 2: During my time on the Wimberley I.S.D. School Board, we have increased our fund balance by over 1.4 Million Dollars and still managed to give teachers pay raises each year. We have been able to accomplish this goal through careful planning and wise stewardship of our limited resources. We need to stay the course in this area in order to continue to meet the challenge of increasing costs in all areas of educating our children. Additionally, we need to continue to partner with organizations like the Wimberley Education Foundation to help promote innovative programs with no impact on our budget.

Answer 3: Issue: Making sure that all of our student populations are able to succeed in our classrooms. Approach: Continue to hire highly-qualified teachers to teach our students, whether these students are our highest performers, our average performers, our lowest performers, our special needs kids or our ESL kids.

Issue: Balancing teaching our kids the essentials to be successful on the STAAR exam with providing the most well-rounded educational experience. Approach: Support our administrative team and teachers in continuing to implement programs that challenge and enrich our children in all areas.

CITY OF SAN MARCOS MAYOR

Question 1: In twenty years, what do you hope the transportation infrastructure in your city looks like? What actions will you take during your term to move toward this vision?

Question 2: What specific programs would you support to improve race relationships?

Question 3: In these troubled times, what would you do to assure your citizens that they are well protected by the police force, firemen, emergency services, and hospitals?

Question 4: What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

Ruben Becerra
Education: Texas State University - Biology Major
Experience: Parks & Recreation Board, Planning & Zoning Commission, Chair of Main Street, President-Centro Cultural & President-Downtown Association
Website: becerra.us

Answer 1: San Marcos’ transportation system will be anchored by 3 commuter rail stops that connect to a comprehensive transportation network, which will include a unified bus system that runs with a more intensified frequency. We will have stronger developed bike lanes and pedestrian walkways, which are interconnected with our green space. To achieve this, I would reach out to other institutions and organizations so we can collaborate and shoulder the responsibility and seek creative ways to maximize our investment to reach our goals.

Answer 2: I will continue to support the efforts already in place; specifically, the Citizens Police Academy and Coffee with a Cop, as examples. I believe if the citizenry continues to interact with our law enforcement, better relationships are inevitable. I will expand initiatives toward educational outreach, in the form of quarterly workshops and seminars open to the public to discuss citizen rights and discrimination.

Answer 3: I will make sure to keep these services adequately funded so this is not a concern. I can speak with certainty San Marcos will have the necessary tools and manpower to ensure the safety of our citizens.

Answer 4: There is a housing shortage that we’ve not addressed aggressively enough. We have been bringing businesses into the city; but their employees are not buying homes here in large part because we don’t have an adequate inventory of homes. This leaves the tax burden to the existing homeowners for services like police and fire. I want to go back to the basics by shifting the way we conduct business in our city. We need to create a predictable environment for developers, property owners and homeowners. We must uphold neighborhood zoning practices to ensure the beauty and history is preserved.

Sam Brannen
Education: BBA-Finance, University of Texas at Austin
Experience: Two decades of corporate experience. 6 years of local grassroots activism in San Marcos/Hays. Led the successful Fluoride-Free SM Coalition in 2015.
Website: www.SamBrannonForMayor.com

Answer 1: Transportation infrastructure is a fundamental aspect of city planning. We seem to be on a trajectory that limits automobile use – conversion of lanes, lack of downtown parking, etc. I’m not in favor of attempts to socially-engineer automobiles out of use in our town through fewer lanes and parking tickets.

That said, we could take clues from what’s going on elsewhere. Many cities large and small around the world makes great use of mini-buses running regular highly-traveled routes for in the range of $2 per ride, and ridership is high. This is probably the lowest-cost solution available.

Answer 2: Most folks I know don’t see a problem with race relations in San Marcos. I see black, brown and white people getting along as neighbors in our community. We need to get past focusing on race. This is not to say that racism doesn’t exist, but rather that city government can’t fix racism.

People of all races are hurting economically in this town, and are looking for answers to the rising cost of living in San Marcos. Most want their neighborhoods, quality of life, culture and environment protected. The need is for the City to respect the Humanity of the people that live here.

Answer 3: Police Chief Stapp and Fire Chief Stephens have done well in preparing their departments to serve our city’s needs, and I expect that will continue.

As essential city services, we need to continue funding fire and police at appropriate levels. Doing so requires us to become more fiscally responsible on other more “discretionary” spending. We can not continue to raise taxes as we have for 5 years in a row now, while forcing our essential services to compete for budget dollars with a too-long list of “nice-to-haves”.

Answer 4: 1) Protecting our neighbors from abuses by city government should be the first priority of any council member. 2) Protecting our neighborhoods from multi-family and commercial encroachment is also high-priority. 3) Maintaining the small-town culture as we grow will be difficult, but...
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worth the effort. 4) Protecting our unique environment from the coming development is crucial as well.

As your Mayor, these will be my areas of focus. Our area is rich in intellectual capital, and I will be calling on members of the community to bring solutions forward, and to vet those of the city.

CHERIF GACIS
Education: Texas State University - MBA 2010, Texas State University - BBA management 2001
Website: www.cherif4mayor.ruck.us

Answer 1: In two words: better cooperation. We have a lot of arterial highways (123, 80, RR 12, IH 35) which need improvement for better flow around the city, but there’s been a mentality that TXDOT or the Federal government are in charge of them, so we have no input. Those roads may not be our decisions, but we know the best way to improve them since this is our home. As Mayor, I would work tirelessly to ensure we improve our

relations with different agencies/entities to expedite improvements such as flyovers, or completing a ¼ loop East of 35 and connecting west to RR12.

Answer 2: Bringing different views to the table is imperative to always keep the dialogue moving forward. I would support having a semiannual event hosted by both the BLM movement, Back The Blue as well as the Centro Hispano to dispel myths, misconceptions and distrust. As Martin Luther King Jr said “Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.”

Answer 3: I’m presently enrolled in the San Marcos Fire Department Citizen’s Fire Academy. In the Spring I hope to enroll in the Police Citizens Academy also. Biggest takeaway I’ve had so far is that the men and women who provide essential emergency services are consummate professionals.

As Mayor, I would continue to support and expand those services as our city grows. The one area where you should never cut corners is public safety, the floods last year taught us that painful lesson.

Answer 4: Traffic, growth, the University, and business are the largest issues in the foreseeable future. Flooding and disaster relief are paramount, and we are still playing catchup from 2015 a year later. There is no panacea or magic bullet to address them all at once, but they can be properly managed with a common vision. The main solution is the basis of my campaign: focused leadership. Instead of being reactive to the issues, you have to address them head on. Working with the neighborhoods, the city manager and staff, as well as the University to move our city into the future together.

JACOB MONTOYA
Education: San Marcos High school, Southwest Texas State
Experience: Former Mayor Pro-Tem., City Council, National Leauge of cities Economic Development steering committee, various sate, and local boards n commissions
Website: www.votejohnmt.com

Answer 1: I’ve led the effort to have our city become an effective multi-modal community, creating safe access for cyclists, people walking, mass transportation as well as vehicular access. Automobile solutions are critical but will not solve all our mobility needs. As the corridor continues to become more congested, I will remain committed to keep our community as free of congestion as possible. I have been a tireless advocate to find congestion proof alternative solutions to IH-35 gridlock and as your Mayor, I will continue to work with our regional partners to accomplish this critical need.

Answer 2: I have been and will remain accessible and open to the experiences and recommendations of all citizens, regardless of race or color. I also believe that in our

students is important so we can identify how and where those inequalities still exist. Once those are identified then we can find solutions collaboratively.

Answer 3: I will continue to support the budgetary needs of our all emergency response teams so our community and our first responders are safe when emergencies arise. Elected officials, police force members and firefighters should have regular scheduled meetings so information gathered from those conversations can help with proactive solutions, which will increase safety within our community. We should continue to encourage citizen engagement with first responders and elected officials, many times unmet needs can be taken care of more efficiently with better communication.

Answer 4: Our city needs a more diversified stock of housing that meets the needs of all generations that live, work, raise families and retire in San Marcos. As we adopt our new land development code we need to make sure the end results delivers predictability for investors and existing land

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owners. Our development models need to be fiscally and environmentally sustainable. I would like to see the city and school district sitting at the same table discussing the challenges and needs that our city and schools have, together I feel we will find more successful solutions.

PLACE 2

Lisa Marie Coppoletta


Experience: Neighborhood Commissioner, Arts Commission, Belt Buckle Award Most Participated SMTX Code Rodeo, Speeches located at: lmc4sanmarcos.com

Website: www.lmc4sanmarcos.com

Answer 1: Because of the record growth seen in the last several years, it has never been more important that San Marcos has a sustainable vision for our community. As we build for the “new” we must eliminate the threat that eminent domain has on our property owners. And we must ensure that the construction makes use of advancements such as permeable pavement, which protects our San Marcos River and eases the impact on flooding. I will advocate for ideas that enable growth through environmentally mindful projects that also sustain the beautiful city we have already established.

Answer 2: I problem solved to create precedent scenarios where private developments are required to perform “shovel tests” for Native American human remains. I celebrate ways San Marcos nurtures our rich diversity through community initiatives. Enhanced participation of Días in neighborhood events will foster connections we have with our citizens in order to thrive both in the good times and during times we join together overcoming adversity and trying circumstances. Our strong sense of community will only grow stronger by fostering a greater level of interaction among citizens our elected officials.

Answer 3: Our Emergency Responders are in the community with boots on the ground every day. When a new project comes along to expand one piece of our city, we must ensure decisions are guided by those entrusted with protecting what is built. Días gave green light to construction of a building downtown that our Fire Chief has stated is beyond their capabilities to protect. We cannot continue to allow such a misguided approach to endanger our citizens. I will ensure that the experts on the ground are given the platform, and the trust they deserve, to advise council on such critical decisions.

Answer 4: Flooding First, Fiscal Conservatism, Foundation for Future Generations. Historic preservation, protect homeowner property values, Veterans initiatives, protect aquifer recharge zone and river. Incentivize construction best practices. My websites ... and youtubecom ... "Coppoletta Chats" extensive video discussions issues facing San Marcos specific solutions grounded in expertise data analysis. A track record of attending EVERY WEEK Citizen’s Comments at City Council and Planning and Zoning forecasting issues with results.

Saul Gonzales

Education: High School Diploma

Experience: (Currently serving) with 8 years on Planning and Zoning 6 years on ZBOA 2 years on Drainage Advisory Board

Website: saulgonzales.wordpress.com

Answer 1: Loop/Bypass from Hwy 21 to Hwy 123, widening Hunter Road from Posey Rd. to Wonder World with 5 lanes, two in each direction with a center turning lane. Post Rd with 5 lanes from Aquarena to Post Rd. 2 in each direction and one center turning lane. My actions would be to encourage a partnership between the county and city to complete these projects.

Answer 2: All races and people of San Marcos should work together to insure peace and harmony, Community Race Relations Commission could be established in our city to promote opportunities for adults and youth to learn to accept and respect other races.

Answer 3: I would assure our citizens that all public and safety entities such as Fire, Police, Emergency Responders would be properly staffed, equipped and adequately funded

Answer 4: Flooding is our foremost issue. We should contract and hire outside civil engineers to design an infrastructure to manage flood prone areas of the city and to implement their plan. Maintaining single family neighborhoods is my second priority. The answer is compatible zoning that promotes similar style housing in a specific area. My third priority is to encourage new businesses to locate in San Marcos. The incentive to them would be tax abatements. We would encourage these businesses to provide benefits and salaries that would ensure a realistic standard of living for our citizens.

Shane Scott

Education: Criminal Justice degree from Southwest Texas State University

Experience: City Councilman 2010-2015

Answer 1: In twenty years I hope that the traffic infrastructure includes a completed loop 150 around San Marcos. I believe this will help eliminate much of the congestion in the downtown area, especially when accidents or other incidents cause Interstate 35 to be at a standstill.

Answer 2: I am thankful to say that I do not feel that they currently are a lot of race issues within San Marcos. I would be happy to support any programs that may be implemented along the way but at the time I am not aware of a need for such programs. Also, the responsibility of race relations does not fall to City Council, that I am aware of, the City Council is responsible for utilities, roads, and safety.

Answer 3: The safety of the citizens is of the upmost importance. San Marcos is blessed with an amazing police force, firefighters, emergency services teams, and hospitals, and it is the responsibility of the City Council to make sure each year that they are provided with the budgets they need to continue to do the jobs they do. Each of these entities knows what they need each year to keep current and have the most up to date technology needed, and when to add needed positions, it’s Councils duty is to listen and make sure they are provided for.

Answer 4: I feel an issue that needs attention in San Marcos is property taxes. Property taxes are increasingly getting out of hand and there is a way to decrease this burden on homeowners. There is a way to add a tax exemption for city taxes and lower the county tax rate that would not cut into needed city expenditures. The current growth rate that San Marcos is experiencing is resulting in higher home appraisal values therefore increasing the taxes due. This process would allow citizens to benefit from the exploding growth instead of being punished with exorbitant home value evaluations.

PLACE 3

Gaylord Bose

Education: University of Houston

Experience: Two terms on City Council Community Action Inc., Board Member Main Street Advisory Board Member Sunset Commission Transportation Board

Website: www.gaylordbose.com

Answer 1: In twenty years, I’d like to see San Marcos integrated into a regional transportation network. I’d like to see CARTS and the Texas State tram working together as CapMetro and UT do. I will continue our investment in developing a rail link in the I35 corridor and continue to work towards rail relocation. I’d like to continue implementing complete streets to ensure cyclists and pedestrians can get around town without adding to traffic. I want to continue resurfacing our streets and keeping them in good repair. I want to continue improving intersections to make sure traffic keeps moving.

Answer 2: I think San Marcos stands out as an example of good relations between the police and the community. Our police force looks like the community it serves and is very active in our community. I’d like to continue our community-based policing that has allowed us to be such a diverse, inclusive, and peaceful place to live. As we grow our tax base and add good paying jobs, our school district will continue to improve and offer more opportunities. I’d like to continue to expand dual credit and vocational education and further integrate San Marcos and ACC.

Answer 3: I think San Marcos already has a lot of confidence in our first responders. We have training programs that are second to none and we work with county, state, and federal agencies to make sure our emergency services are prepared for any eventuality. As we continue to grow, we need to ensure that we can keep investing in training and growing our emergency services. We need to continue developing our warning systems so that when disaster strikes, we can reach every citizen and get them to safety.

Answer 4: I think the single issue that needs the most attention and planning in San Marcos is development. This is the key issue that ties many of the issues we’ve discussed together. Development well integrated into our downtown will allow our city to grow without disrupting our neighborhoods and increasing traffic. It will also help us develop a prosperous downtown business scene while retaining the historic charm of our downtown. We do not need more massive apartment complexes in neighborhoods far from the university, putting stress on our transportation, emergency services, and our environment.

Brian Henderson

Education: MS in Educational Administration from Eastern IL University (2002)

Experience: Executive Director of the Foundation Of Law Government and Civil Rights

Website: www.revrbrianhenderson.com

Answer 1: I would like to see more public transportation and longer weekend hours for people to get around as the city of San Marcos grows. If we have more growth, then we will need it. As we grow we can study putting more traffic lights for safety as needed. That’s how I see it.

Answer 2: I would reach out to Black Lives Matter and other groups and promote more

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diversity in the city. We need more diversity in city government jobs and departments. I also believe that there should be more diversity in city and county government positions and elected positions. That’s why I’m running and I would be only the third African-American since 1851 to be elected to city council. If elected I would want to see if we’re complying to attract African-Americans and other minorities with city government jobs. Then along with the rest of council, come up with programs to address diversity and

Answer 3: If elected I would like to add two fire stations and a training academy here as this city grows. I would like to add on to the police station and make sure our hospitals are first class.

Answer 4: I believe that along with expanded and new facilities for our first emergency responders. We need higher paying jobs and we need to attract higher paying companies to the San Marcos area. I would like to work with the Greater San Marcos partnership to attract more jobs and industries to San Marcos. I would also continue to fight to keep our community as the safe and intimate community we fell in love with despite being one of the fastest growing community in America. Another thing I would fight for is to continue for better infrastructure as our city continues to grow.

Ed Mihalkan
Education: B.A. – Political Science Bradley University M.A. International Affairs Ph.D. International Relations – latter two degrees from the American University

Answer 1: HOPE/VISION: South/East Loop (By-pass) around the interstate; substantially expanded CARTS mass transit system; comprehensive sidewalk network/ increased bike lanes; increased use of our airport; increased parking on campus/ improved university bus system; commuter rail. ACTION: cooperation of city and county governments to purchase right of way & begin a scheduled construction program; work with businesses & apartments to increase ridership; prioritize sidewalk construction where it will connect existing sidewalks; have business community, university & city government work together.

Answer 2: First impressions are key. Sometimes, people meet police officers under less than ideal circumstances. Break down Us-Them identities & develop multiple opportunities for conversations so officers & citizens of all ages meet as fellow San Marcans. The SMPD’s “Coffee with a Cop” is a great program & we need to expand from it to build more connections. Let’s emphasize de-escalation, have bi-lingual officers, humanize officers & citizens. Some of our young people are unsure of the treatment they will receive from city employees. All citizens need to be treated equally by all city employees.

Answer 3: Our community has an excellent EMS, fire department & police department. As our community grows, we must increase the staffing & resources for those departments. Further, we need to ensure the seamless coordination of our public safety organizations with those of county, school district, DPS. We need to include Texas State’s KTSW in public safety outreach and encourage the efforts towards establishing a community radio station.

Answer 4: The most important resource of our community is our people. According to the Vision San Marcos Comprehensive Plan, we are faced with these stark realities: 20% of households have incomes of less than $10,000/year; poverty rate is 36.9%; median income $26,734. Other source - our middle incomes have stagnated. ACTION: commitments to affordable housing, daycare, improved public transportation, support for adult education/vocational training, and real job creation with decent wages. Do we want a permanent underclass or a San Marcos that is a home for all people?

Jason Montgomery
Education: Baccalaureate- Texas State University Political Science-Major International Studies-Minor Associate’s Degree- ACC Real Estate Brokers Licensing Experience: US NAVY Firefighter & Police Officer (6yrs) San Marcos Industrial Development Board (Current) Sunset Advisory Committee (14-15) Airport Board (16-16)

Answer 1: In twenty years, I hope that all of the transportation is fully environmentally safe. Positive contributing actions that as a council member would allow me the privilege of speaking commandably on behalf of the community. Transportation cost, going or coming or in some cases by being sitting still. So by engaging the community more directly about what they are willing to pay for makes it an implementation necessity. This is something that will need to be continually invested into over the span of the in question “twenty years” and beyond.

Answer 2: Elected I would invest in protection services to bring about unity among race. I say this because safety affects us all. Also I see no race except the human race (just being honest). I so wish to eradicate this from our mouths. Gender too. So again, I would work with services that provide safety and protection to all to help bring more needed unity to this community. As a black signal parenting father the very most direct thing I can do just as community neighbor is lead by example. What other way to bring about change other than leading by example?

Answer 3: 110% whatever it takes. While in the US NAVY I enlisted as a designee firman. Went to Fire “A” school, reported to CVN-71 serving for about 90 days with the Damage Control Division but needing to be sent TDY. I was sent to Harbor patrol. From this point on I finished my career in the US NAVY as a Law Enforcement Master-At-Arms force protection specialist. I say this because I have been an active firefighter and police officer with specialized in-depth training along with work as counter partners with EMS, Nurses and Doctors. These are my Sisters and Brother.

Answer 4: Many, many, many issues but the most pressing is flooding. Flooding must be vigorously attacked to once & for all counter-attack the overcast upon the city of not having properly dwell with flooding or have the vested interest to fix the issue. 258 Million! 50% to infrastructure & 50% to housing. The split equally withdrawn from to support administrative support as needed but not to exceed 5% combined. Invest in incentives to entice businesses that have the vision to see San Marcos as home that will be willing to pay an above living wage at entry level positions with benefits & considerations.

Travis County

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Question 1: Please explain what you view as the most important function of the Office of the District Attorney?

Question 2: How would you propose to improve the Victims Services Division of your office for greater help to victims of crime and protection of their rights?

Question 3: How can you assure the public that you will provide the highest legal protection for victims of crime?

Maura Phelan (R)
Background: 12 yrs Asst DA in Travis Co., Board Certified in Criminal Law for 10 yrs, appeals (civil & criminal), 9 yrs civil litigation, founder of nonprofit rescue

Education: University of Houston Law School, J.D.; Texas A&M University, B.S. Animal Science; Board Certified - Criminal Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization
Campaign website: www.mauraphelan.com

Answer 1: To serve the people of Travis County and be their attorney pursuing felony and juvenile charges; finding diversion and treatment options for defendants that do not pose a danger to the community; handling civil suits involving families and children when there is abuse or neglect; pursuing public integrity violations presented to the office and not handled by other agencies; and the appeals of cases handled by the office. To do so in a manner that JUSTICE is done, as required by law, which requires consistency, transparency, accountability, and the utmost ethics in carrying out that service.

Answer 2: Establish a sexual assault unit with its own victim services personnel to aid the victims and keep them informed and cared for as their cases proceed. Especially given the issues with the processing of the evidence and the enormous impact of the offenses themselves, now compounded by the failures of the system which have greatly increased the time to disposition - they need additional services and compassion and these personnel would be able to provide consistency and support. In all other cases, utilize the victim services division to keep the victims and witnesses
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involved and informed.  
Answer 3: I have the experience and expertise required to understand the entire range of duties of the office, as I have actually performed those duties. I have been on both sides of most of the matters that the District Attorney will handle and have the perspective to be able to find ways to make the process be more accurate, responsive, and fair. I also have experience working with causes, community interests, and people affected by government actions as well as with police, agencies, investigators, the courts, and governing bodies which allows me to have the perspective to find a means for justice.

Margaret Moore (D)  
Education: BBA, University of Texas at Austin, 1970; JD, University of Texas School of Law, 1972  
Campaign website: margaretforda.com  
Answer 1: The fair and efficient administration of justice: The DA, and the Office she creates, should inspire the community’s highest confidence in the justice system. That confidence is critical to society’s ability to self-govern, settle disputes, and ensure public safety.

Additionally, taxpayers should be confident that the ODA is making wise and appropriate use of its resources. To ensure that this function is fully discharged, the public should select a highly competent leader—one who has experience in setting public policy, choosing and supervising personnel, and acting as a responsible steward.

Answer 2: I will evaluate the regularity and extent of services to all victims. Victims should be contacted promptly. In particular, I propose to implement a plan that will ensure that victims of felony domestic violence offenses are contacted within 24 hours of the report. Another area that deserves special attention is the response and support to victims of sexual assault. It is important to me that sufficient follow-up takes place to keep all victims fully informed as to the progress of each of their cases through the system and to support them as they endure devastatingly difficult experiences.

Answer 3: I think it important to note that a prosecutor is required by law to see that justice is done. This imposes a duty to both victims and defendants. To meet that duty, I intend to: (1) lead by example; (2) adopt and enforce clear personnel policies; (3) institute regular in-house training—including education in ethical duties, professional development to enhance skills, and personal wellness training to ensure employees are able to cope with the stresses of their responsibilities; and (4) conduct regular evaluations of employee performance to ascertain that expectations are met or exceeded.

SHERIFF

Question 1: Please explain your plan for deportation of undocumented persons?  
Question 2: What are your proposals for tackling challenges such as enhancing collaboration among the Sheriff’s Office, the City Council, the County Commissioners, and the community?  
Question 3: Please explain how you think the Sheriff’s Office can contribute to improving race relations?  
Question 4: Many mentally ill persons are in jail instead of treatment. How do you propose to remedy this situation?  
Question 5: What issues within your County need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

Joe G. Martinez (R)  
No response

Sally Hernandez (D)  
Education: B.S. Criminal Justice from St. Edward’s University. Master Peace Officer Certification.  
Campaign website: www.vote4sally.com  
Answer 1: I will follow criminal due process principals embodied in the U.S Constitution and enforce the law. Having worked over 21 years hand-in-hand with victims of crime, I have the training and experience to rebuild trust with all communities and will continue find opportunities to help victims of violent crimes. We must ensure that all Travis County families are safe in our community, report crime, and are confident that law enforcement will treat them equally under the law. I will stand up for our progressive values.

Answer 2: We must partner with other entities to prevent crime, be a victim advocate, and figure out what the community needs. As Chief of Investigations, I worked with the Sheriff’s Office, the Commissioners Court, and other county entities to keep our courthouse and county buildings safe and to implement emergency response plans. As Constable, I collaborate with all law enforcement agencies and have been recognized by multiple law enforcement agencies for outstanding service and partnership.

Answer 3: The vast majority of people, officers, and general public want the same thing: law enforcement that is just, fair, and effective. We all want to be protected from targeted. Body cameras are very important and help increase community trust. However, they will not solve all issues. As such, I will also advocate to end the school-to-prison pipeline and promote a diverse staff to build a strong office that reflects our entire community. More importantly, I will listen and act. I have a proven track record of strengthening and rebuilding community trust through service and accountability.

Answer 4: We must stop criminalizing mental illness. I will partner with agencies, families, and organizations to tackle health services, mental health training, and re-entry programs. Those individuals who can be diverted should be diverted from jail. The Sheriff’s Office should help these individuals find services once they are out of jail. This would increase public safety and create safer communities. For those who cannot be diverted due to the danger they pose to themselves or the public, we should ensure that they receive adequate mental health services while in custody.

Answer 5: One of my main priorities will to use my 35 years of law enforcement experience to keep our neighborhoods and families safe. I will (1) direct more resources to violent crimes and property crimes, (2) champion community policing and partner with neighborhoods so that they can develop their own neighborhood watch program, (3) expand my Parking Mobility program, Senior Fraud Prevention, and Child ID Safety programs countywide, and (4) prioritize assault family violence investigations by ensuring detectives follow up immediately with victims of abuse.

Eric Guerra (L)  
No response

Debbie Russell (G)  
Background: Del Valle ISD Trustee, ACLU-TX volunteer, Austin’s Public Safety Task Force member, candidate & issue campaign organizer, esp. police accountability.  
Education: BA-English Lit, UH. Most education comes from community organizing/coalition-building.  
Campaign website: austingonzo.blogspot.com/  
Answer 1: It is not the Sheriff’s job to deport anyone. The question is, “how will I handle ICE detainees?” The current Sheriff has been vocal in his support of the disgraced “Secure Communities” (and its re-branded “Priority Enforcement Program”), not recognizing the human consequences or legal liability to the TCSO. The law says that we don’t detain anyone beyond the initial 48 hours without a judicial warrant, not just an ICE “request.” ICE has to prove they are a danger to the public safety and a flight risk. The 14th amendment ensures due process for ALL persons, not just citizens.

Answer 2: I’ve long been engaged in this effort as a community organizer. As a DVISD school board trustee, I’ve successfully worked with TCSO/Council/Commissioners/community on many fronts. The current Sheriff has done some good work to this end; my plan is to keep what’s working/put to bed what’s not and bring in community members who have effective projects and advisors for improved coalition-building tactics. Recently, I’ve been engaged with APD and council on community-input on APD policy; on their budget and on community inclusion into the new Austin city manager selection process. (see website)

Answer 3: Teach by example. But to be teachers, you have to not only do your job well, and according to the policy which precludes racial profiling (yet the numbers show they do it anyway), you have to actively learn how to “undo racism.” This is not a feel-good term... this is an active program that all deputies will be mandated to participate in upon
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my election (as is currently proposed for all COA employees). I also have plans for effective community policing, one with concrete goals and quantifiable results. This will serve both the deputies and the community immensely by helping to rebuild trust.

Answer 4: Advocate via the aforementioned collaborative process for more funding for more services to divert them from our jail. Most of the revolving door to our jail is due to untreated mental health issues...it's pennies on the taxpayer dollar to house them in long or short term treatment facilities. Also, judging by the recent suicide of a Travis deputy and the arrest of a WilCo deputy for domestic abuse, we need to offer/de-stigmatize mental health support in-house. We don’t screen applicants for psychopathy (there’s a significant overlap between that and physical abuse). I will change this.

Answer 5: No one should be in jail that’s not an actual public safety threat. Our “cite and release” policy for small amounts of marijuana was a good start. I will rewrite policy to (highly) encourage maximum legal discretion for all drug arrests. Decriminalization = less “crime” = less need for jail space. Divert resources to treatment. TCSO offers 100% of low-level drug offenders confidential informant status, so they go buy/do more drugs on our watch & dime instead of getting treatment. I will stop this. Shouldn’t the Travis County Sheriff be progressive on the drug war, not engender drug use/abuse?

TRAVIS COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Question 1: What are the transportation issues facing your precinct and how do you propose to address them?

Question 2: As the population of Travis County grows, so does the development in the county. Please explain what role the County should have in mitigating flooding issues?

Question 3: What would you do to improve the quality of life for those living in the most impoverished areas in your district?

Question 4: Please explain whether you would favor new campaign finance rules for the County candidates that would include disclosure of contributors and expenses, and searchable online databases, available to the public?

Question 5: What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

PRECINCT 1

Pat McCord (R)

Background: Served 2 years on the Pflugerville City Council; Active in the community on various boards and commissions; Chairman of a Water District.


Campaign website: patmccord.com

Answer 1: There are two primary transportation issues in precinct 1, Roads and lack of public transportation. Roads: Precinct 1 suffers from poorly maintained roads and bridges. Additionally, the inter-connectivity of the population centers is poor. Public Transportation: A large portion of Precinct 1 is rural farmland. The population centers in Manor, Pflugerville, Hornsby Bend Webberville, and Austin Colony are not connected. The bus system does not serve critical areas of the community.

Both issues need to be addressed with Cap Metro and the County. Transit centers and roadway improvements.

Answer 2: Recognizing the flood plane and preventing construction and development in the path of flooding is common sense. Improvement of the flood channels to prevent floodwater backup due to brush and materials buildup during flood events should be an ongoing effort.

The county has the responsibility for clearing and maintaining the floodwater path on public lands. A cooperative effort with landowners could be a positive step to the mitigation of future flooding events. Recently Travis County has experienced exceptional rainfall events. Events like this are not preventable, but could be improved.

Answer 3: The resources and funding to address all of the impoverished people and areas of Precinct 1 do not exist. The County budget provides some needs for health issues and living conditions improvements. Through grants, matching funds and mandates for affordable housing, the County touches the needs, but cannot fill all of the needs. Through a plan of infrastructure improvements in water, waste water and transportation, the County can assist in providing services where it is needed and create opportunities for people, living in need, to reach services and employment opportunities.

Answer 4: Yes, I fully support a 100% transparent campaign finance system. Candidates and office holders should provide detailed reports, possibly monthly reporting or reports that are triggered by contribution and expense amounts, especially during the last 90 days before an election.

Answer 5: Infrastructure in roads, bridges and water / waste water structure are paramount issues. Soon affordability issues will affect the areas of the county that support population groups that have been pushed East by Austin’s growth. I do not propose forming any restrictions on residents that prevent them from selling their property for a profit as the location becomes more desirable to developers. The very development that the residents desire, promote the increased growth in their area of the county. The Commissioners Court, master planning roadways and other infrastructure is the key.

Jeff Travillion (D)

Background: 14 yr. State of Texas, General Land Office and Comptrollers Office; 16 yr. City of Austin, Austin Energy, Small Minority Business Resources, PWD

Education: Bachelors, Jackson State; Masters of Public Affairs, LBJ School of Public Affairs; Alfred P. Sloan Fellowship Harvard University and Carnegie Mellon

Campaign website: www.jefftravillion.com

Answer 1: 1) The lack of a comprehensive planning process which convenes the service users (Del Valle, Elgin, Hutto, Manor, and Pflugerville); 2) Congestion issues are significant, but getting people to get to medical care, shopping, or work in a reasonable amount of time is critical (It can take hours to get 15 miles). I will work to convene stakeholders and set transportation priorities. We must address express service, comprehensive park and ride services, and a system to address the basic needs of vulnerable populations. If people can not get to work, the number of jobs created does not matter.

Answer 2: The County must take a regional approach and work with Bastrop, Hayes, and Williamson Counties to make sure that we are reviewing all of the latest flood plain patterns and mitigation opportunities. Counties have limited land use authority, but as new developments are considered, the county can use road development and maintenance (and the funding of road development) to negotiate more compatible development of subdivisions.

Answer 3: The primary issues for quality of life are connected by access to transportation. Families must have access to health care, so we must build as reliable as system in the county as we have in the City of Austin. Elderly need access to grocery stores and pharmacies. People also need access to jobs, whether in Austin or other parts of the precinct. The system of getting people around between Elgin, Manor, and Pflugerville is woefully inadequate. Employers must be sure that employees can reliably get to work. For youth to work they need access to public transportation.

Answer 4: I support transparency, currently County candidates have to disclose contributors and expenses. I would support searchable online databases that are available to the public.

Answer 5: 1) Transportation - I support the development of a comprehensive planning process that includes the people who actual use public transportation and focus on practical things that can solve problems; 2) Access to health care -- work with the Central Health District, Seton, St. David’s, and the University of Texas’ Medical School to address serving the needs of the entire Precinct; 3) Job development -- attracting employers and preparing local populations to work in the area; 4) youth development -- focusing on Title I schools and providing after-school and work based learning opportunities.

Ashley “Flashe” Gordon (G)

Background: Native of Port Arthur, TX; moved to Austin to attend UT Austin. Recent breast cancer survivor dedicated to equity, accessibility, and justice.

Education: Senior hours at The University of Texas at Austin, double major (Sociology and Spanish-Language

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Answer 1: Traffic and accessibility are the focal points of transportation issues in Pct.1, and current proposals do not highlight increased public transit options as the cleaner, more affordable solution. I have been working with focus groups concerning the Austin Mobility Bond and CapMetro’s Connections 2025 plan. I work to increase those services in Eastern Travis County, which would require a partnership with the county. Concerning the tolls, I propose we search for more grant money versus bonds to fund much-needed highways such as 130 to alleviate the financial burden to working class families.

Answer 2: No structures should be built without required compliance to current environmental quality and impact reports. Developers must include drainage strategies in their plans based on the reports such as bioretention areas in conjunction with a retention pond. Bioretention areas can filter and release small amounts of rainwater slowly to designated areas while retention ponds collect and store water, which can be used to address water shortages. Furthermore, if a development can't comply with sustainable, "green" ordinances, the project should not be permitted.

Answer 3: Currently I work with grassroots organizations on diversifying economic development opportunities. The native and long term residents of Precinct 1 usually don't have access to the tech jobs that drive the county. We help small, local businesses with their business plans, and direct traffic to those locations so monies can be reinvested locally. Long term, we are partnering with education and leadership non-profits so that under-served children will gain access to skills, such as coding, making them more marketable for the tech industry and globally competitive.

Answer 4: Residents can currently access documentation of contributors and expenses through the County Clerk’s office, but it is highly inaccessible. One must be able to go to the office (transportation concern) and do it during business hours. It would be beneficial for this information to be made available online via a site that is easy to navigate. Building a new database may be an expensive and redundant task, however. The suggestion is for the Secretary of State, who already has a database with this information, to share the software with all of the counties in the state.

Answer 5: Many issues, such as transit, affordability, housing, health and wellness, and education all impact Pct.1 and equally deserve our attention. A good place to start to help fund our efforts is reducing the funds we use to jail non-violent offenders for minor infractions. Then, for instance, the county can redirect funds to health and wellness clinics. Currently it takes EMS 15-20 minutes from Austin’s Colony to reach a hospital. This is a public health nightmare that should be addressed immediately. Clinics are an attainable milestone as we look into building a hospital in the east.

**PRECINCT 3**

**Gerald Daugherty (R)**

**Background:** He has been an Austin businessman and entrepreneur for more than 40 years. He has been County Commissioner for Travis County PCT 3 10 years this year.

**Education:** Gerald graduated from Cypress-Fairbanks High School in 1968. After a career in professional baseball he graduated from the University of Texas in 1975.

**Campaign website:** www votegerald com

**Answer 1:** Roadways ... increased capacity where possible, improvements with major intersections and working with Cap. Metro for more routes and a more robust schedule will help. The roadway projects (on our major roads) must have a very comprehensive and productive relationship with TX Dot. I’ve had the most help with TX Dot because they know how committed I am for roadway improvements.

**Answer 2:** The County must have appropriate engineering studies performed before development is allowed. Two problems exists today that makes it very difficult to mitigate flooding ... 1) Older developments didn’t have the engineering studies to offset these floods and 2) In the case of Onion Creek in SE Travis County, the headwater of Onion Creek start in Hays County where we (TC) have no control. We have begun very aggressive engineering studies to help tell use what we need to do to mitigate the floods.

**Answer 3:** Travis County is one of the MOST supportive communities in America ... but we can only do so much because it’s tax dollars that help with food, travel, utilities, health care, after school programs; just to name a few of the things we do. I have and will always do the most I can with voting to help take care of the most in need.

**Answer 4:** The County really has no campaign finance rules (except no corporate contributions). Everyone that runs for office in the County has to show where/who contributions come from. I would never try and hide anything about my campaign contributions or expenses!

**Answer 5:** 1. Traffic and Mobility – I answered this with the first question.

2. Taxes- Almost everyone is feeling the affordability issue in Central Texas. The BEST place I can help with this in by setting the tax rate as low as possible because I can’t do anything about the high appraisals. The Travis County Commissioners Court has for 3 years now set the tax rate at a level where your County taxes have been Flat- even with higher home values.

**David Holmes (D)**

**Background:** David moved to Austin in 1993 from Odessa to work for Bob Bullock. He worked in the legislature over 15 years and now works as a mediator.

**Education:** Bachelor of Communication, UT Permian Basin, Master of Public Administration, UT Arlington

**Campaign website:** votedavidholmes.com/

**Answer 1:** The Texas Transportation Institute released a report in 2014 that illustrated clearly that even if we build every road on our wish-list, we will still face gridlock. We simply cannot build our way out of congestion with roads alone, but we should also build smarter roads and improve infrastructure where necessary. Instead of providing companies incentives to move to Austin, we should examine the possibility of providing incentives for large employers to offer telecommuting, pooling, public transportation, and flexible schedules. People need options that fit their neighborhoods.

**Answer 2:** We must work across local governments to improve water-flow in local creeks and make certain that new development does not add to the problem. If a development meets the current set of guidelines, the commissioners have no choice but to approve it. The criteria needs to be changed to make certain new development is not increasing flooding. I will work with the development community and flooding experts to find solutions that keep new development from adding to the problems we already have with flooding.

**Answer 3:** While poverty is not as concentrated in Precinct 3 as in other portions of the county, those who reside in the Precinct 3 deserve the same access to services. I will work to make certain resources and transportation are available in the precinct.

I am supportive of the County Judge's efforts to build housing on county property. Also, I will work to improve rural roads in the precinct. In my volunteer work with the Sheriff’s Victim Services Unit I have seen roads in Western Travis County that are in such disrepair that emergency services cannot navigate them.

**Answer 4:** I strongly support more comprehensive campaign finance rules as well as regulations and reporting for lobbying of county staff and officials. There is limited reporting, no limits, and standards that make what data is there difficult to examine. You will hear counties described as the Wild West of politics - almost anything goes under current rules.

After allegations of corruption in El Paso, that county went to the legislature for authorization to create a county Ethics Commission. We should not wait until a problem arises in Travis County to make sure we have strong ethical standards.

**Answer 5:** Mobility, affordability, and conservation are issues that I hear so much about in Precinct 3 that I printed them right onto my campaign signs as my top priorities. Additionally, I will focus on government transparency, strengthening law enforcement and emergency services, and alleviating wildfire and flooding risks.

Precinct 3 is large and has diverse interests, but one thing we all share is a love for the Hill Country. We must do all we can to make sure the Hill Country does not disappear due to poorly thought-out development. Our community will continue to grow, but we can grow smarter.
Travis County

TRAVIS COUNTY CONSTABLE

**Question 1:** What do you think are the most important responsibilities of the County Constable’s office?

**Answer 1:** To provide leadership, integrity, and service to the community. To ensure the maintenance of an efficient, professional and transparent office that will provide service in a respectful manner while executing the responsibilities of the Constable’s Office. To be the law enforcement arm of the court. To run an office that is accountable to the people, the Commissioners Court and to be efficient stewards of taxpayer funds. To work with other law enforcement agencies and public service entities to provide the people of Travis County with the safety and security that they deserve.

**Question 2:** What emerging problems do you foresee in the Constable’s office and how will you address them?

**Answer 2:** Perception is the primary emerging problem affecting the Constable as it is affecting all peace officers. Peace officers are seen in a bad light due to the force that has been used on persons arrested. I have addressed this through proper training and constant oversight of our policy and procedures.

**Question 3:** What should be the minimum qualifications for the position of Constable?

**Answer 3:** The minimum qualification for the position of Constable should be a minimum of 60 college credits, a master peace officer license with at least an Intermediate Peace Officer License and/or be an Honorably Retired Texas Peace Officer with at least 20 years since active duty/separation.

**Adan Ballesteros (D)**

**Background:** 37 years of Law Enforcement Experience, including the Medal of Valor, Pflugerville’s Citizen of the Year award, and Four time Constable of the Year.

**Education:** UT at Austin, Graduated from the Texas DPS Police Academy, SHSU SWAT School conducted by the FBI, and Governor’s Center for Management Development.

**Campaign website:** www.adanballesteros.com

**Question 1:** What do you think are the most important responsibilities of the County Constable’s office?

**Answer 1:** The most important responsibility is service and protection to our community by performing our duty with due diligence and with courtesy. Transparency is a must. We must become one with the community, working, living and worshipping together.

**Question 2:** What emerging problems do you foresee in the Constable’s office and how will you address them?

**Answer 2:** We must support the youth in our community helping to realize their potential in life. Assisting with opportunities and preserving the family unit. We should be living examples in our deeds and actions.

**Question 3:** What should be the minimum qualifications for the position of Constable?

**Answer 3:** The minimum qualification for the position of Constable should be a minimum of 60 college credits, a master peace officer license with at least 20 years since active duty/separation.
TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR

**Question 1:** What is the most important problem in the County Tax Assessor’s office and how do you plan to address it?

**Question 2:** What specific measures will you take to maximize the tax collection rate?

**Question 3:** How do you propose to assure the integrity of the voter registration rolls?

**Question 4:** How can the duties of the County Tax Assessor’s office be improved?

Bruce Elfant (D)

**Background:** I worked for the Attorney General’s Office, served as Constable for Precinct 5 for 20 years and was elected as Tax Assessor in 2012.

**Education:** BS, Communications, UT Austin, Assoc.Criminal Justice Degree ACC, Certified Tax Office Professional (CTOP), Certified Elections Administrator, (CERA)

**Campaign website:** Elfantfortaxassessor.com

**Answer 1:** The Tax Office is struggling to serve a rapidly increasing population and cope with increased unfunded state mandates. Lines are growing at our tax office locations and security is not at acceptable levels. We are working to enable and encourage more of our customers to “skip the trip” and pay taxes and vehicle registrations online. We have lowered the e-check fee to $1 and have simplified the online payment process. Taxpayers can also choose to receive tax bills by e-mail with will save local tax.

**Answer 2:** The Travis County collection rate this year has reached a record 99.41%. Travis County is the only county in Texas that does not source delinquent property tax collections. This year we released a list of the top 10 delinquent property tax payers and were able to collect on most of those and many other properties. We attempt to reach delinquent taxpayers by phone, e-mail and mail to get them to pay or establish a reasonable payment plan. That is why we have to foreclose on so few properties.

**Answer 3:** Texas is operating a 19th century paper-based voter registration system in the 21st Century. Election officials currently rely on their ability to decipher handwriting and properly enter millions of paper voter registration applications. We also rely on third party volunteers to properly receive, secure and return voter applications. It is time for Texas to join 31 other states that allow their citizens to register to vote online. Online voter registration has proven to be more accurate, more secure and cheaper. Travis County alone would benefit by saving as much as $200,000.

**Answer 4:** Our biggest challenge is maintaining acceptable levels of security for our employees, customers and the $2.5 Billion we collect and disburse to 111 taxing jurisdictions each year. We are working to upgrade our technology in order to reduce manual and paper based processes. We are saving taxpayer dollars by making tax receipts available online, encouraging taxpayers to sign up for e-bill and making online payments easier and cheaper. We also implemented the first web based vehicle title process in the nation. Online voter registration would further increase accuracy and reduce taxpayer costs.

Steven Haskett (L)

**Background:** Information systems, including development of the Vehicle Title and Registration System deployed in every Tax Assessor’s office in the state.

**Education:** BS Petroleum Engineering, Texas A&M University

**Campaign website:** www.facebook.com/Haskett4TravisTaxAssessor

**Answer 1:** The County Tax Assessor’s office is actually the Tax Collector’s office. By state law the tax appraisals are handled through the Travis County Appraisal District, whose board is appointed by the participating taxing units in the county. The Tax Assessor/Collectors office, as is clear by the mission statement, is primarily there to serve the taxing units. I believe the primary purpose should be to educate, inform, and as painlessly as possible serve the individual residents of Travis County.

**Answer 2:** What an awful question. I will do my best to help inform taxpayers of their obligations in a timely manner, be clear about the options available to them, and give them a shoulder to cry on as they are taxed out of their homes. I’ll use my pulpit, such as it is, to inform renters of the indirect cost of their property tax on rents to encourage them to consider *very* carefully the tax increases that are making life increasingly unaffordable in Travis County.

**Answer 3:** If you have read this far, you know you are a concerned voter. I will honor your commitment to our community by enforcing election law as written.

**Answer 4:** I have already spent 7 years of my life working with TxDOT to improve the customer experience for paying our vehicle registration taxes. I will use my position as the capitol county’s Tax Assessor/Collector to influence the development of the system to increase the simplicity and decrease the time requirements for vehicle registration. The name should be changed to simply the Tax Collector’s office, though changing the name is a function of the State Legislature. I believe it is important to highlight the lack of direct public representation in the assessment of taxes.

CITY OF AUSTIN TRANSPORTATION BOND ELECTION

**Proposition Ballot Language:** The issuance of $720,000,000 transportation and mobility improvements bond and notes for improvements to Loop 360 corridor, Spicewood Springs Road, Old Bee Caves Road Bridge, Anderson Mill Road, intersection of RM 620 and RM 2222, Parmer Lane, North Lamar Boulevard, Burnet Road, Airport Boulevard, East Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard/FM 969, South Lamar Boulevard, East Riverside Drive, Guadalupe Street, Slaughter Lane, William Cannon Drive, Rundberg Lane, East Colony Park Loop Road, South Congress Avenue, Manchaca and South Pleasant Valley Road; sidewalks, Safe Routes to School, urban trails, bikeways, fatality reduction strategies, and the following local mobility substandard streets/capital renewal projects: Fawell Lane, William Cannon Overpass Bridge, FM 1626, Cooper Lane, Ross Road, Circle S Road, Rutledge Spur, Davis Lane, Latta Drive/Brush Country,

Johnny Morris Road, and Brodie Lane; and the levy of a tax sufficient to pay for the bonds and notes.

**Explanation of the ballot language:**

The City of Austin’s $720 million mobility bond is composed of three categories of improvement projects. The largest of the three is the proposal to implement the City’s seven corridor plans, a nearly $500 million in the next 10-30 years we have $9.5 billion in transportation needs as we continue to increase in the property tax rate. It would cost city of Austin taxpayers an additional $56 per year, or less than $5 per month, based on a median-valued home of $250,000. A home valued $190,000 would be $43 per year and a home valued at $427,650 would be $96 per year.

**Proponents say:**

1. The primary focus of Proposition 1, the $720 million Smart Corridor Transportation plan is congestion relief achieved by increasing traffic flow for vehicles at key intersections throughout the city. This package will increase reliability, safety, and opportunity for all four modes of transportation: automobile, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle.

2. Transportation is a key investment in the future of Austin. Since 1996, voters have approved only $638 million in transportation bond funding, while our city has faced record-breaking growth and demand on our infrastructure.

3. Prop. 1 will cost less than $5 per month for the owner of a median-priced home (2015: $264,000) in Austin. The funding mix includes using $250 million of existing bond capacity under our current tax rate while asking voters to approve a 2.25-penny increase in the property tax rate.

4. Austin has woefully underfunded its transportation needs as we continue to rapidly grow as a city and region. Over the next 10-30 years we have $9.5 billion in identified mobility needs, including up to $2.3 billion in corridor needs. A $720 million bond would start the progress and experts who have studied Austin say this bond is the place where we should start.

5. This bond is only part of a comprehensive regional plan to address traffic flow. The Central Texas Regional

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Mobility Authority (CTRMA) is completing work on North MoPac and beginning work on South MoPac. Long-awaited improvements to IH-183, the Bergstrom Expressway, are underway and the Oak Hill Parkway project will be beginning soon. TxDOT is beginning work on IH-35 with major investments on the way. The roads in the Smart Corridor plan are the “local” roads that will connect Austin drivers to regional corridors. The Austin City Council approved placing the Smart Corridor Transportation Bond on the November 8, 2016 ballot. The plan is supported by more than 41 Austin area associations and organizations.

6. Transportation is a quality-of-life issue and upgrading our streets, bridges, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and trails is essential to enhancing the livability and quality of life in Austin.

Opponents say:
1. The voters were denied the option to vote on the separate items in this bond.
2. The $482 million included in the bond for work on eight or nine corridors won’t come close to paying for the actual construction on all of them. The city staff estimates a cost of $1.56 billion to do just seven of them. Making the East Riverside improvements alone is estimated to cost $766.7 million according to city staff. That is an increase from the 2013 estimate of $398 million.
3. The real cost of Prop 1 is unknown. Estimates vary widely and are increasing rapidly as to the actual cost of implementation. This ensures the corridor work will be a piecemeal project, and the city will be forced to return to taxpayers to ask for more bond money to continue the job. The initial cost will add approximately $82 per year to the property tax bill of the average homeowner.
4. With only $482 million to spend, if this bond passes, there is no certainty about which specific projects and recommendations identified in the plans will be funded.
5. The size of this bond issue, $720 million, could rob the city of bonding capacity for other projects, including flood mitigation, until 2024.
6. Of the seven roadways included in the bond proposal, five include portions that are currently controlled and maintained by the Texas Department of Transportation. If the city decides to take full responsibility for those portions, it could cost between $1.5 and $2 million annually for the first 10 years, which could lead to an increase in the Transportation User Fee.
7. The rushed process of the bond proposal through Council has not allowed for adequate analysis of how it will fit in with CodeNEXT and Capital Metro’s Connect 2020 Master Plan.
8. $20 million for trails is a waste of money and solves no traffic problems.

AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

Question 1: In twenty years, what do you hope the transportation infrastructure in the city looks like? What actions will you take during your term to move us toward this vision?

Question 2: What specific programs would you support to improve race relationships?

Question 3: Austin tops various lists for job opportunity, economic prosperity, and best places to live, but it also has the title of “Most Economically Segregated City” in the United States. What would you do to help mitigate or reduce the effects of this economic segregation?

Question 4: CodeNEXT is the City of Austin’s initiative to revise the Land Development Code, which determines how land can be used throughout the city - including what can be built, where it can be built, and how much can (and cannot) be built. When the city staff is ready to present the new CodeNext to Council, would you support adding a code map at the same time, so that the citizens and neighborhoods have an opportunity to see the impact of the proposed changes on their neighborhoods? Why or why not?

Question 5: In these troubled times, what would you do to assure Austin citizens that they are well protected by our police force, firemen, emergency services, and hospitals?

Question 6: What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 2

Wesley Faulkner

Background: With deep ties to Austin’s tech scene, I’ve worked hard to become a pillar of the community. I bring a future forward perspective to tackling issues.

Education: Majored in Electrical Computer Engineering at the University of Texas

Campaign website: austin4everyone.com

Answer 1: My wish list would include the following: PRT, Light Rail, More bike lanes with safer intersections, TNCs, a complete sidewalk system, more efficient bus routes, and pedestrian bridges. Many of these solutions are cost effective and make sense. As a growing city, traffic is only going to get worse if we don’t do something about it. I will push for feasibility studies that will prove that this approach will work, and the data should speak for itself.

Answer 2: Race is a hard subject to talk about, but it is an important conversation to have. The city is already taking a big step by hiring a Chief Equity Officer. More immediately, I would work with the police chief to incorporate sensitivity and cultural awareness on an ongoing basis. Race relations can’t be just occasional training, but part of the day to day.

Answer 3: Density and diversity of housing is a good way to help make Austin more affordable. These new housing options should be dispersed all around the city, rather than clustered in pockets. We also need high paying jobs in these areas. People want to work where they live and having higher paying jobs in these areas will help level the economic playing field.

Answer 4: Absolutely. As a founding member of Open Austin, a group founded to promote government transparency, I fully embrace making all applicable information public and accessible. It helps us all to have full disclosure on issues that are being considered. No matter how smart the city council is, it will never be as smart as the combined brain power of its citizens.

Answer 5: Many of these departments are either understaffed, under funded, or both. We need to research other funding methods so we don’t continually raise property taxes or propose new bond initiatives. Those ways are not sustainable, and we need new thinking to tackle this problem. We could invest and take a equity stake in growing businesses that are started in Austin. Maybe start an endowment that will grow and feed back into our general fund. Other entities find ways to make these solutions work, and we can too.

Answer 6: The availability of high paying knowledge worker jobs in District 2 is very important. It will raise wages, and since the jobs will be here in the district, it will lower transportation costs. Raising the incomes of the people that live here will impact a variety of issues, from healthcare to childcare. There are many other issues I would like to tackle, but income equality has so many benefits it’s the one I would like to highlight.

Dela Garza

Background: I have committed my career to public service. First as an Austin Firefighter, then as an Assistant Attorney General, and now as a City Council Member.

Education: B.S in Journalism from Texas A&M University. J.D. from Gonzaga University School of Law

Campaign website: www.delagarza.com

Answer 1: We must continue to move toward a multimodal system that includes safe options for cyclists and pedestrians and has significantly more high capacity public transit options than we have today. Additional bus rapid transit, rail, bus priority lanes, or other options should provide residents with access to a reliable and convenient public transit system. Continuing to build and maintain more road infrastructure alone is expensive and environmentally unsustainable. We should also ensure that CodeNEXT, our land development code rewrite process encourages smart transit corridors and avoids sprawl.

Answer 2: I have proactively met with several grassroots organizations that work to improve race relations. It’s important that we continue to participate in an open dialogue; solutions will only be possible when all voices have a seat at the table and help with development of specific programs to aid in healing relationships across the community. I sponsored the creation of an equity tool that is being developed and should result in ensuring our City practices are equitable. I also supported the creation of the Equity Office and believe it will help us take strides forward on race relation issues.

Answer 3: I have consistently supported and led on policy that aims to protect our working class families from being driven out of Austin including pushing for more affordable housing in new developments, looking for innovative ways and funding options to address food access issues, and taking the lead on a historic increase for our Health and Human Services Department to

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serve the most vulnerable populations in our community. I have also opposed regressive tax policies like the homestead exemption that overwhelmingly benefits the wealthiest and does nothing for renters who make up over half of Austin.

Answer 4: I am supportive of adding a code map in order to provide the community with opportunities to better understand and visualize the allowable uses in their neighborhoods that are based on the new code. Adopting the new code will be one of the most significant and impactful policy decisions this Council will ever make, and it’s critical that we are creating a transparent, fair, and inclusive process. Our land development code should be developed to be as user friendly as possible, so I support any efforts to make the process and the final product more approachable and easy to understand.

Answer 5: In recent years, we have seen troubling stories from across the country and the world regarding levels of hatred and violence that have no place in our City. We are lucky to have what I believe is the one of the best groups of public safety professionals of any municipality, but we also owe it to our residents to diligently look for ways to improve the services we’re delivering to the community on an ongoing basis. Training must include more about diversity and de-escalation techniques, and we should further strengthen relationships between the community and public safety to foster trust.

Answer 6: My district is in desperate need of more affordable housing options to ensure working families aren’t forced to move out of our City. I’ve sponsored policy to develop options to address this issue including expanding housing options for low and middle income families. We must also address food access issues to ensure children aren’t going to bed hungry. I’m proud of the funding we added during the budget process, but we have more work ahead of us. We must also invest in flood mitigation and appropriate infrastructure to protect life and property from the flooding risks we know exist.

Casey Ramos
Background: Born and raised in Austin, TX. Specifically in the Dove Springs neighborhood of District 2. Community Advocate and In-class tutor for DVISD & AISD.

Education: Currently a senior at St. Edward’s University and obtaining a BA in Economics with emphasis on public policy.

Campaign website: facebook.com/ramos4d2

Answer 1: I hope to see Austin as an affordable, primarily single-family household, city. I would be sure to over see the rewriting of land development codes under the code next process and be sure that a sufficient amount of land is set aside for modest single-family households.

Gonzalo Camacho
Background: Bolivian immigrant. 34 Years Texas resident. 23 Years transportation/traffic engineering experience (15 years solo practice). Homeowner in Northfield.

Education: UT Arlington graduate. BA, BS, & MS Civil Engineering. 50+ Hours of MBA at U of Houston. Registered professional engineer in the State of Texas.

Campaign website: gonzalocamacho.com

Answer 1: Transportation infrastructure is generally referred to roads and 20 years is the life cycle of pavement. The City must have a well funded operations, maintenance, and reconstruction transportation infrastructure program including sidewalks. As a member of City Council I will use my years of roadway infrastructure experience to promote and advocate such a program.

Answer 2: A large segment of District 4 residents come from various ethnic groups and the median income is about one half the City of Austin median income. As a member of City Council I will support a government that is accountable and transparent and I will promote a culture of dialogue, understanding, compassion and celebrate multiculturalism.

Answer 3: As a member of City Council I will promote an efficient government, reduce unnecessary expenses and programs, and reduce regulations that increase the cost of housing. As a member of City Council I will advocate a free market economy, local businesses, and a healthy family economy. As a member of City Council I will advocate for free public transit for school aged students, retirees, and the disabled.

Answer 4: We should expect for CodeNEXT and the managers of CodeNEXT to have a review system that is accountable, transparent, and responsive to Austin residents. Austin voters must understand CodeNEXT and its implications (including costs) and they must be provided with necessary information including maps. As a member of City Council I will advocate for CodeNEXT to be accountable and transparent.

Answer 5: The most critical element in today’s economy is to have sound economic policies, proper check and balances, and a system that is accountable to tax payers. As a member of City Council I will advocate for the City to have an efficient and accountable budget that is not a burden to tax payers; a budget that promotes the economic vitality the City’s infrastructure and its staff.

Answer 6: District 4 might be one of the most “economic segregated” district in Austin experiencing a range of needs. As a member of City Council I will advocate for: property tax relieve, improvements in transportation infrastructure, diversification of travel modes, promote quality of life, advocate for APD neighborhood storefronts, government accountability and transparency, and promote a culture of dialogue and understanding.

Greg Casar
Background: Austin’s youngest-ever Council Member; former policy director at Workers Defense Project

Education: University of Virginia, B.A.

Campaign website: www.casarforcouncil.com

Answer 1: I am dedicated to a future where the majority of Austinites do not have to drive in a car alone on their way to work. With our pace of growth, and our sprawling pattern of development, traffic not only can- but will- get much worse if people have no option but to drive a car up the highway every day. We must fund a mass transit system, including rail, and I have worked during my term to get the city back into the rail business. I've helped support a multi-modal transportation bond package for November and advocated for urban planning policies that support public transit and shorter trips.

Answer 2: Our statewide leadership has failed to address the deep inequities within Texas. So it is left up to local leadership to do what we can to bring our communities together. Our district is one of the city’s most diverse, with large refugee and immigrant populations and significant numbers of Anglo, Latino, African-American, and Asian American residents. I’ve supported after-school programs, immigrant rights, re-entry programs, policing reform, and economic empowerment in our community. Race relationships improve when there is fairness and shared power.

Answer 3: Getting off the list of most economically segregated cities is one of my very top priorities. That’s why I and Council Member Renteria championed the Fair Housing Initiative. This initiative has garnered support from a broad based constituency - and the components were passed overwhelmingly by Council in June. The core premise of the initiative is that to promote more a more affordable, equitable, and integrated Austin, we need large amounts of housing capacity, both of subsidized and unsubsidized housing, to reduce displacement and promote integration.

Answer 4: CodeNEXT is an important step for our city’s fiscal health, improving our transportation system, and slowing the rising price of housing. I’ve tasked our city management with ramping up their efforts on CodeNEXT. Transparency must be a very high priority. Before applying new rules to corridors and neighborhoods, we need interested members of public to understand what the proposed changes mean, since we, as elected officials, ultimately serve at the will of the public. Maps, plans, and examples, such as those presented by the Code consultants earlier this year, will help in that effort.

Answer 5: Public safety for all is a priority in District 4. In my first months in office, I helped end the standoff in the hiring of new firefighters. We also worked to get a commitment from the police department.
that the response time is shorter. We need to expand all the first responders so to their neighborhood.

with what the City is proposing to be added to their neighborhood and see if they are happy.

can obtain better jobs and make more money.

or college. With the better education, they will reduce the stress and strain on the force towards a community policing model which officers have the training and support they need to have a bigger presence and become more familiar with the area. Another issue that needs attention is homelessness. The individuals who want to be homeless, they need to leave Austin. The ones that are mentally ill, we need to encourage the State to handle these individuals with mental facilities. Those who are homeless due to illness or loss of job, we need to set up job training and temporary housing.

DISTRICT 6

Jimmy Flannigan

Background: Small business owner for 20 years, former President of the AGLCC, co-founder of Northwest Austin Coalition. NW Austin resident since 2000.

Education: BBA in Management Information Systems from The University of Texas at Austin McCombs School of Business, MBA from University of Phoenix.

Campaign website: www.jimmyflannigan.com

Answer 1: I will fight for more consistently built roads that are safe for pedestrians and drivers as well as a wider variety of transportation options for everyone (road, bus, TNCs). In addition, I want to ensure access to public transportation for disabled persons and seniors, which is currently inconvenient for much of District 6. For the long term, we must combine our land use and transportation planning to avoid situations like gridlock on 620 caused by new development without considering infrastructure. We should not encourage endless and unplanned sprawl.

Answer 2: The work of the quality of life commissions is a good start and we must continue to increase diversity and balance in city services. I support the Mayor’s creation of a Chief Equity Officer and will work proactively with community groups who are key to the success of this effort. In addition, we need to ensure that our police officers have the training and support they need to protect our community safely and consistently. Similarly, we should move towards a community policing model which will reduce the stress and strain on the force and foster better community relations.

Answer 3: Economic segregation is the byproduct of the modern-day impacts of historical segregation and the affordability crisis that affects all of Austin. It’s time for the city as a whole to take responsibility for the underserved and the underemployed, ensure housing is accessible in all parts of town, and that access to jobs and schools is accomplished through a comprehensive transportation network. Safe, affordable, and reliable transportation to jobs and homes is key and I will lead on the effort to address it.

Answer 4: I’m a big fan of mapping analysis, as it helps show how impacts are spread across the city, not just to single neighborhoods. District 6 is ignored because our part of town is often left off of maps used by the city when making decisions. It’s also a problem for Williamson County residents like myself who are left out despite representing nearly half of District 6. CodeNext is a critical process that will help us determine the future of land use and transportation and I will lead on this effort. Proper planning is critical to ensuring the best and most cost-effective outcomes.

Answer 5: We must implement the community policing model and expand civilian staff to address District 6’s property crime problem in the most financially responsible way. This helps to allow our badged officers to stay focused on emergency calls and community relationships. For EMS, the high suicide rate is appalling and we must have the necessary staffing levels to ensure our first responders are supported and providing the highest-level of emergency services. On fire issues, we need to expand neighborhood efforts to implement the FireWise program to mitigate the risks of wildfires.

Answer 6: Traffic is the most critical issue and my success getting Anderson Mill Rd included in Mayor Adler’s transportation bond demonstrates my ability to work across the city to find solutions to our problems. We can expand that effort to Duval, McNeil, & Lakeline as well as collaborate with TxDOT on 2222, 620, & Parmer Ln. I also want to expand APD civilian staff to address property crime and work on a new business model for Austin Water to address utility bills while protecting our water resources. We need representation that will not be ignored and knows that we can fix our problems together.

Don Zimmerman

Background: I’m a 5th generation Texan born and raised in San Antonio, TX. Married to Jennifer Zimmerman since 2009, son Chase, 3 months, daughter Marina 17 yrs.


Campaign website: www.DonZimmerman.org

Answer 1: The transportation system should reflect the best available technology to move the most people and materials at the best speed and lowest cost. I’d prefer Austin as a leader in TNC style on-demand car and van pooling with state of the art expandive roadways, with most bike traffic physically separated from vehicle traffic for safety and efficiency. More and wider roadways are needed, including divided green spaces for congestion relief and wildfire fighting. I do not support un-affordable subsidized passenger rail or “gondolas” or other such infeasible schemes.

Answer 2: I support ending race-based programs and eliminating all hyphenated-American subsidies, because they are likely illegal under anti-discrimination laws such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and they reinforce and promote community division based on an arbitrary measure of skin “color” or blended ethnicity. I completely agree with Supreme Court Justice John Roberts: “The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to stop discriminating on the basis of race.”

Answer 3: I don’t want to merely “mitigate or reduce” economic segregation, I want to eliminate it. In the 1920s and 1930s, Austin city government imposed racial segregation through its centralized planning and zoning ordinances. Today, Austin city government imposes economic segregation through its centralized planning and zoning ordinances, as well as subsidized housing projects (e.g. TDHCA 9% tax credit) and Chapter 380 corporate subsidies to the world’s wealthiest corporations (like Apple and Samsung), plus subsidies to UT and AISD and hundreds of others. All should be eliminated.

Answer 4: CodeNEXT has aptly been re-named “Code NEVER”. It’s ten years late, millions over budget, and will NOT resolve the mutually exclusive demands of prior property owners who demand static neighborhoods built with decades old zoning laws, and demands of new owners who want rights to pursue market demands with higher density. We should eliminate centralized planning and respect deed restrictions of neighborhoods, with view to not subsidize infrastructure changes merely to promote higher density. A “code map” will always fail to communicate the complexity of centralized planning.

Answer 5: Being “well protected” is an extremely subjective concept that has as many definitions as there are people in Austin, and times have always been at least somewhat “troubled”, because living with risk is problem of the human experience which can’t be solved by government. Council should seek policy that provides the best service for the lowest cost. I favor
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police task forces for 24/7 response to public disturbance (e.g. STR) and improving property crime resolution from current ~14% to over 50%.

**Answer 6:** Transportation congestion and wildfire risks first, affordability second. I will work with Travis County and TX-DOT for a western expressway loop to connect SH-45 at Lakeline Mall all the way to I-35 south. My success in leading defeat of $285M Travis downtown courthouse Bond in Nov. 2015 led to my success in getting $30M for District 6 added to $720M Bond ballot item. We also need to open the 150 acre Franklin-tract Park on Upper Bull Creek by completing the 1984 Austin McNeil road plan which I’ve re-named and slightly relocated as “Firebreak Parkway”.

DISTRICT 7

**Natalie Gauldin**

**Background:** I’ve worked with the community teaching in >30 area schools and parks; Current: Board, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods; Chair, Friends of The Grove

**Education:** BS in Applied Learning & Development with Honors, University of Texas at Austin; Attended AISD’s Gullett Ele, Murchison MS, Anderson HS

**Campaign website:** www.nataliegauldin.com

**Answer 1:** Future policy should focus on multi-modal transportation and invest in road infrastructure that can support upcoming technology such as autonomous vehicles. I plan to make it my priority to remove the barriers to using alternative modes of transportation so this choice can be a reality for more Austinites in the future. I support putting rail on the ballot, allowing citizens to have affordable housing choices near transit stops, investing in building out safe bike and pedestrian infrastructure including shade and shower facilities, and increases in bus frequency.

**Answer 2:** I support efforts to implement community policing programs designed to give police officers the opportunity to proactively engage with the community instead of only reacting to crime. Body cameras are useful tools to help ensure police accountability by providing fair and objective evidence. In addition to those programs, I plan to continue to follow the national conversation on race relationships, especially as we come together to improve guidelines for training and policy of our police departments. Austin certainly has room for improvement in this area.

**Answer 3:** As popular as this city is, we won’t achieve economic diversity without allowing for diversity in housing types. I believe residents should have opportunities to choose to make small sacrifices such as the size of their lots or square footage of their homes in order to achieve affordability. Many choices, such as tiny homes, aren’t legal today. Subsidized affordable housing is another tool we need to use to allow for diversity across the city. We cannot ignore transportation costs as part of the solution; individuals of all income levels should have access to reliable transit near their homes.

**Answer 4:** I fully support government transparency. Citizens should have a voice in both the creation of new code and how it is implemented. The code map should be presented before the public input portion of the CodeNEXT process. I will engage with community members throughout the process to ensure their neighborhoods, the very neighborhoods where I grew up and will raise my child, are still wonderful places to live for years to come. Preservation is not a plan. We must adjust our growth patterns in smart ways in order to shift away from the unaffordability and transportation issues we see today.

**Answer 5:** These services are crucial to the safety and quality of life of our residents. We spend over half of our budget on public safety. When making budget decisions, I will work diligently to ensure that we are spending tax dollars efficiently and on programs that work. I support transparency and accountability and believe quality data collection paired with community input are the keys to ensuring these programs work. Parts of the district, especially the most northern portion, are underserved by city services. It is important to ensure that all areas of the city are given needed services.

**Answer 6:** Traffic; Affordability: Rents are rising and property owners are maxed out by taxes. It will be my responsibility to show that city leaders are using your money efficiently. I will lower the tax rate and increase the exemption for seniors and those with disabilities as well as support diversity in housing types. Engagement: Over 40% of adults are younger than 35, over 50% rent, and many live north of 183. We need to use communication technology and quality data collection to ensure these groups receive the attention and investment they deserve from City Hall. natalie@natalieforaustin.com

**Leslie Pool**

**Background:** 35-year Austin resident, currently District 7 Council Member, first person elected to this North-Central district on the new 10-one Council in 2014.

**Education:** LBJ School of Public Affairs, MPAff (thesis not completed), Grove City College, B.A. cum laude, Communications & Literature.

**Campaign website:** www.lesliepoolcampaign.com

**Answer 1:** As a CM, I’ve worked to help create a transportation network where you can get from one place to another safely, in a reasonable amount of time, while providing an array of options for getting there. I supported funding to upgrade dangerous intersections & directed funding to Safe Routes to Schools projects to improve bicycle/pedestrian safety near schools. A step toward improving congestion is the bond package which I voted to put on the ballot. It will speed traffic on Lamar & Burnet, build miles of new sidewalks, fund urban trails & protected bike lanes, computerize light signals, etc ...

**Answer 2:** Everyone in Austin deserves to feel safe and comfortable in their work and daily lives. As a CM, I voted for body cameras and more community policing to improve relationships between police and the community they work to protect. I co-sponsored MPT Tovo’s recent anti-discrimination resolution. I have promoted No Place for Hate in AISD which teaches students to speak up and speak out, and I support community conversations around cultural differences and similarities that overcome barriers to civil discourse and social justice.

**Answer 3:** I’m working on options to lower housing costs via an Affordable Housing Trust Fund, creating Neighborhood Preservation Districts & earmarking funds to expand our housing repair/rehab programs. I voted for tenant rights & fair chance hiring programs, to increase Health & Human Services funds for important programs addressing an array of needs like workforce development, training, expanded opportunities for at-risk youth, infant nutrition, childcare support for low-income families, tutoring, after-school programs, and access to health care & healthy fresh food where grocery stores are scarce.

**Answer 4:** Adding a code map is a terrific ideal! It would provide a way to chart changes and how the Code is organized, to visualize what the impacts might be or might look like in practice. Public awareness & education are imperative to successfully completing & adopting a new Code. Everyone’s ideas & input will help Council shape the final version. A first question might be: what will my city look like five, ten or 25 years after adopting CodeNEXT? I support a robust public discussion, and would suggest asking the League to sponsor public forums with the City and the Citizens Advisory Group.

**Answer 5:** Community safety is a top priority: Council is moving forward on community policing programs that will put uniforms back on patrol and hire new civilian positions to concentrate on non-patrol related activities, especially in neighborhoods. I voted to increase staffing levels for EMS & Fire. Our just-finished FY17 budget provides funds to address the sexual assault evidence kit backlog, new forensics staff positions and needed training, and we included City funding for the Sobriety Center.

**Answer 6:** Affordability & uncontrolled growth threaten our quality of life. It’s critical we protect our environment & neighborhoods as we grow. Unlike my opponent, I’m opposed to over-densifying existing neighborhoods. I passed the Austin Community Climate Plan & helped lead efforts for Austin to purchase more solar power. I voted to establish the first City homestead exemption & raise the exemption to $82,500 for seniors. I led the effort to increase budgets for parks & pools, restore library hours to pre-recession levels; expanded Austin summer youth & playground programs. Fighting for lobby reform.

DISTRICT 10

**Alison Alter**

**Background:** Business owner and community leader with 20 years experience in university and nonprofit leadership. Parks Board Member and Ramsey Park Project Chair.

**Education:** BA in Public Policy, Stanford University; Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government, Harvard University; Leadership Austin Essentials Class 2015

**Campaign website:** www.alisonalter.com

**Answer 1:** I seek efficient and accessible public transit, development that encourages walkability and cycling, constructive relationships with private transport innovators, and dedicated funding to upgrade infrastructure. I will work with the Transportation Dept. to integrate advanced technologies to help manage our travel demands and prepare our infrastructure for adopting Autonomous and Connected Vehicles. I will integrate our land use and transport choices and implement transportation impact fees. I will oversee effective implementation of the 2016 transportation bond should it pass.

**Answer 2:** The city can be most effective by mobilizing resources to support wealth building activities in under-resourced communities. Investments in job training, affordable housing, public transit, and homeowner education are specific examples. Policy is a blunt instrument to change people’s hearts. Thus, I also would support the efforts of organizations such as the Austin Area Urban League and Leadership Institute.
Travis County

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Austin to create spaces for open and honest dialogue to build stronger relationships between communities within Austin and connect people.

**Answer 3:** Education is both the key engine of opportunity and a critical factor when choosing where to live. I will advocate for reform of state funding formulas to keep a bigger share of our tax dollars to improve our schools across the city. I will invest in early childhood services, out of school time activities, and job training programs. I will support a linkage fee on commercial time activities, and job training programs.

**Answer 4:** Yes. Citizens and neighborhoods must know and understand clearly and concisely how any proposed revisions to the current Land Development Code will affect them well in advance of any approvals at Boards, Commissions or Council. A code map should be supplemented with a grid that shows specific differences between the existing Land Development Code and CodeNext.

**Answer 5:** The key to navigating troubled times lies in encouraging more direct dialogue during non-crisis moments to build trust, mutual understanding and a sense of neighborliness. I also would support additional cross agency crisis planning and efforts to keep response times low. We should remember that Austin has highly trained and professional first responders and is buoyed by two Level 1 trauma centers and seven Level IV trauma centers as well as other hospitals and clinics. With the arrival of the Dell Medical School, healthcare delivery will only improve in the years ahead for Austin and CT.

**Answer 6:** Key issues in my district include: how to manage growth responsibly, how to protect and enhance open spaces and the environment, how to get Austin moving and keep Austin livable. As a council member I will help the city solve problems and create an environment in which all can thrive by bringing everyone to the table, focusing on the big picture, and connecting the dots across policy areas. I regularly will tap into D10’s expertise, talent, and diversity of opinion to guide my decisions and put community first rather than treating every decision as an individual ad hoc choice.

Sheri Gallo

**Background:** 55-year resident of District 10, Local Austin business owner for 35 years, Civic and Community Leader, Involved in neighborhood schools

**Education:** Trinity University in San Antonio, University of Texas at Austin

**Campaign website:** www.sherigallo.com

**Answer 1:** Our traffic crisis impacts our environment, our economy, and our quality of life. We need solutions across multiple types of transportation options. An example is Sen. Watson’s proposal “to fix” IH-35 by using multiple funding sources and mechanisms to pay for it. A recent survey showed that over 90% of District 10 residents used a vehicle for transportation. I made sure that the mobility bond included money for Loop 360 & Spicewood Springs Rd. We must also consider everything from rewarding staggered work hours and work from home initiatives to more options for rapid bus programs.

**Answer 2:** We need to make Austin more affordable by committing to less spending and lower tax & utility rates. Making Austin more affordable for everyone will allow more Austinites to stay in their homes and neighborhoods. I am also proud of the work of our APD & Chief Acevedo. I am honored that the Austin Police Association has endorsed my campaign. We can and must do better. I supported a large, but needed expenditure for police body cameras. I believe this program will bring even more transparency and trust into the relationships between our citizens and our public safety.

**Answer 3:** Addressing affordability is critical. Recently Austin’s property value has declined – not because people were climbing out of poverty, but because poor families were fleeing Austin for more affordable communities. This is a travesty and one of the most shameful current events occurring in Austin, and it’s all happening on our watch. Making our transportation system and land use policy work better will have the greatest impact on our economically disadvantaged communities. CodeNext is our best chance to address the inequities and help Austin reduce the effects of economic segregation.

**Answer 4:** Yes, I am supportive of a code map. The cost of implementing such a system must be considered, but the benefits are critical. I am also supportive of other easy to use and easy to understand interactive tools that will allow residents to understand multiple impacts of CodeNext - traffic, traffic patterns, taxes, tax base, rents, land uses, and other indicators need to be easily understood and communicated to make sure CodeNext is successful. We have to get CodeNext done and done right. Thorough public education, extensive community input, and broad community support of CodeNext are my goals.

**Answer 5:** By nearly every indicator, Austin is a safe community. My priority is to ensure our public safety departments are given the resources needed to protect our city. New community policing goals are being implemented, and Dist. 10 residents can sleep easier knowing that we are also implementing new wildfire plans. I believe in our public safety leadership and their visions on how to evolve and improve. Thanks to Sen Watson, the new UT Medical School is going to be a healthcare and economic engine for our city. I’m excited about the opportunities to leverage those resources for a healthier city.

**Answer 6:** My promise to the voters is to be a good leader and an even better listener to find solutions on issues like traffic congestion, the affordability crisis, & increasing police presence in their neighborhoods. I will continue to work with my colleagues to make Austin more affordable and to make our commutes take a few minutes less. My focus is also on the smaller issues that affect residents on a daily basis from traffic calming devices or stop signs to reduce speeding on neighborhood streets to building sidewalks and lowering speed limits to make walks to school safer.

Nicholas Virden

**Background:** Native Austinite and UT Austin grad with a passion for public policy. Interned at the Texas Capital in 2013 and led a political club in college

**Education:** The University of Texas at Austin Major: International Business Minors: Spanish, Management Information Systems

**Campaign website:** virdenforaustin.com

**Answer 1:** I foresee our local transportation infrastructure consisting of automobiles and buses since Austin lacks infrastructure, density, and funds for rail. Cap Metro does an insufficient job impacting congestion in our city - stagnating ridership and empty buses even with record population growth show us that. To increase transportation efficiency, I would prioritize mobility in the budget to ensure constant care of our streets and highways. For buses, I’d like to see competing bus systems introduced like in Miami to provide greater frequency, convenience, and affordability for Austin commuters.

**Answer 2:** I would encourage a retraining of our entire police force from a “shoot first” mentality to a peaceful, reasoning-first approach. A private company called Detroit Threat Management began escorting small business owners, giving free protection to local neighborhoods plagued by violent crime, and self-defense training to Detroit citizens to truly do community policing in absence of police. They haven’t had a single fatality to date. I would push APD to adopt these community policing strategies to improve race relations.

**Answer 3:** We need to 1) stop trapping minorities in failing district schools, 2) cut property tax rates and extend the homestead exemption, and 3) reduce the zoning and land-use regulations that are driving home prices and rents up. Economic success comes from a quality education and livability. We need more high performing charter schools to serve low-income students in areas that public schools are failing. Moreover, we should cut property taxes to significantly reduces costs of renting or owning. Cutting zoning and land-use red tape for developers makes it easier to build affordable housing.

**Answer 4:** Yes. The public should be informed to the most reasonable extent possible on how proposed ordinances and changes in city public policy will affect their lives, especially with something as significant as CodeNEXT.

**Answer 5:** Austin has some of the greatest economic opportunity in the country, so I can’t say that we live in troubled times. If people are worried that we aren’t protected by our police, firefighters, EMS, or hospitals, then we need to examine the causes for that, whether it be because of something like police brutality causing people to lose faith in the justice system, lack of funding for these areas, or whatever it may be.

**Answer 6:** D10’s biggest issues include The Austin Oaks and The Grove PUDs, residential & commercial property tax relief, short term rental (STRs) regulation, and mobility. I would renegotiate the raw deal D10 neighborhoods are getting regarding the developers’ contributions to upgrading infrastructure by their PUDs. Extend the homestead exemption for D10’s homeowners to lower property taxes. Mobility should be prioritized in the budget instead of being paid for by property tax increases & bonds. STR regulations should punish owners with noisy, disruptive guests while leaving courteous owners alone.

Rob Walker

**Background:** 20yr Austinite; Wife Janet for 21 yrs 2 children; Own Business; Georgetown U, former prof; Hope Chapel, Boy Scouts, AIPAC, EP CCT, Tree Folks, Spanish

**Education:** PhD from UT in Taxation and Finance; Winner, National Dissertation Award in Taxation; MBA from Stanford U in Finance; BA from Rice U in Economics

**Campaign website:** www.walkerforaustin.com

**Answer 1:** We need more roadway and selective additions to mass transit. Driverless cars will also help relieve traffic congestion. 360 needs to be a 6-lane limited access hwy, the Union Pacific track down Mopac needs to be relocated east of Austin and the space used for a subway or high speed rail with garages built at stops similar to DC’s Metro.

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We need variably tolled lanes to aid express bus service on I-35, 183 (NW and east), and 360. I will push for a substitute mobility bond that is weighted heavily toward traffic congestion relief. Corridor beautification needs to wait till traffic improves.

**Answer 2:** We can legislate equality, but it’s very hard to legislate respect because it comes from the heart. Respect is built through relationships. Austin needs to support programs and to take actions that build cross-racial relationships that will help make all races feel accepted and welcome here. I advocate much more support of community sports such as city basketball and softball (half my team were Hispanic and Black). I also support community initiatives like the Austin Disaster Relief Network which has brought together 162 Greater Austin churches and 4,500 volunteers from all races.

**Question 3:** The most important day of a child’s education is the 1st day of kindergarten. It separates the have and the have nots. I would advocate that low-income families be given the means to have access to quality preschools. This will eventually help children bridge the economic gap. Also, I would raise Austin’s minimum wage to a living minimum wage. The current minimum wage of $7.25 is inadequate. Many families in Austin suffer because of this. A livable minimum wage means that families will have greater economic mobility to move out of poorer areas. This will help reduce economic segregation.

**Answer 4:** Yes, the code map needs to be presented concurrently with the new code so that we may see the impact of the proposed changes on our neighborhoods. The Staff and Mayor say they will present the code to the public in Jan 2017 and take 3 months of feedback on it, but will not present the code map till Oct 2017. That is unacceptable. My advisor was in a meeting with the Mayor and Staff on Sept 14 and was stunned that the Staff continues to say that they will not show the code map to the public until Oct 2017, even though the Mayor said he thinks the map is more important than the code itself.

**Answer 5:** Our police, firefighters, EMS and hospitals are doing excellent, caring work. Nothing’s perfect, and there have been overreactions by our police. Body cameras will help. Policing is not easy, and our officers never know when something unexpected or dangerous will come at them. I applaud them for their overall moderation and caring. Chief Art Acevedo is one of the best we’ve had, reaching out to communities caringly and enthusiastically. He is a man of character. I’m pleased that our Council has budgeted more EMS workers to reduce the overtime and stress that have contributed to 2 suicides.

**Answer 6:** Traffic is our biggest issue. Less than ¼ of the $720 mobility bond goes to traffic congestion relief. I oppose it because ¼ is for corridor beautification and bike lanes which do little to relieve traffic congestion. “Austin doesn’t need its nails done; it needs stents!” I will propose a substitute bond weighted heavily toward traffic relief. Converting 360 into a 6-lane limited access hwy with 2 tolled lanes will cost $300 million. My bond proposal will allocate $150 million for 360, and TxDOT will match that. The mobility bond only allows $46 million for 3 overpasses on 360.

**AUSTIN ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Question 1:** Given State cuts to education and increased costs (employee healthcare, salaries, energy) what should be AISD’s budget approach and how/where do we find the funds to meet our needs?

**Question 2:** Like the City of Austin, AISD is a very diverse district encompassing both those with access to vast resources and those without. What should be the District’s approach to educating Austin’s youth given this diversity/disparity?

**Question 3:** Like most urban school districts, AISD faces increased competition from local charter schools. How should AISD respond to this competition?

**Question 4:** Some school communities complain of “overcrowding” at their campus and some schools are “under-enrolled.” What should be the District’s response to this duality?

**Question 5:** If you believe that School Board Trustees have a responsibility to be accessible to the community, what steps would you take to ensure that you are accessible to and communicating with members of your district?

**Question 6:** What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

**DISTRICT 2**

**Andy Anderson**

*Background:* Lived in Dove Springs (District 2) since 1991. Volunteer for Texas PTA. Mentored for Austin Partners In Education. Serve on many AISD Committees

*Education:*

**Answer 1:** The approach the District should take would be to evaluate those programs and services which may be duplicated and consolidating them to better serve the campuses. Also look at assets that the District may have that are not providing any benefit at this time and evaluate those for either leasing opportunities that could bring in revenue or selling capabilities. Finally the District should continue to partner with the City, County, and Businesses to provide support and assistance for families to be able to live and work in Austin.

**Answer 2:** The District should continue to offer programs and resource such as PALS for Children to be a peer/mentor to other children and Programs through APIE such as Mentoring to bring the awareness and education of different cultures and resources available to all students and the community at large. The District should also focus on Customer Service at all AISD Facilities (Central Office, Campuses, etc.) to demonstrate daily the respect of diversity not only in the classroom but in the workplace through respect.

**Answer 3:** In order to better handle the competition from Charter Schools, AISD needs to investigate 1) why are Parents choosing these types of schools over Charter Schools and 2) Why are Charter Schools choosing certain areas to open a school. The District could develop a strategy with collaboration from the campus and community of any campus to market the attributes of that campus and compare that to what the Charter Schools near them are offering to show the various differences.

**Answer 4:** The District’s response should be to continue evaluating those areas and work with the Community and the Committees that the District has to better work out solutions that are agreeable and workable to all. The District strives to maintain a level of 95% Capacity at all its campuses. Knowing that campuses are overcrowded is not practical for children to lean because of the attention provided by the teacher to the student. Furthermore, if a campus is under enrolled is not practical as that leans to spending more money for a facility that is not fully utilized.

**Answer 5:** To be accessible and communicate with the community, I would 1) Obtain information as to the Campus CAC and PTA Meetings are and attend those to gain feedback and input on those aspects that are impacting the District and 2) Work with the District to obtain information on Community Groups and when their meeting times are to also get feedback and input. I would also work to set up a Bi-Monthly meeting where I can be available to answer any questions of citizens related to the District or to the area I represent.

**Answer 6:** The issues that I see are 1) Accountability - To ensure we are getting the most output and effectiveness out of those resources and services that is being provided by the District and 2) Budget - Knowing that the District is sending more back to the State under Recapture, need to explore more of the programs and services for their effectiveness 3) Affordability - It is getting more expensive to live in Austin and so more are moving to the outer regions of Austin which is causing some overcrowding at campuses. Need to work with the City and County to have more affordable housing for families.

**Jayme Mathias**

*Background:* A product of & longtime advocate for public education, Dr. Mathias serves on the AISD Board. The AISD has accomplished much under his leadership.

*Education:* Dr. Mathias holds two undergraduate degrees, four graduate degrees, including an M.S. in Organizational Leadership, and his Ph.D. in Leadership Studies.

*Campaign website:* http://www.jaymemathias.com

**Answer 1:** Under Dr. Mathias’ leadership, our AISD Board has implemented a robust process of formulating & approving its annual budget, with plentiful opportunities for community input. Despite our legislature’s tragic mistake of underfunding education, the AISD has performed exemplarily, even with very limited means, largely due to heroic efforts by district employees & partners. During the past
four years, the AISD has increased teacher pay by 12% and twice raised the minimum wage, all while passing a balanced budget for the first time in years and decreasing our tax rate by five cents.

Answer 2: Together with many partners, our district has provided numerous programs & resources to historically-disadvantaged students. In October, our AISD Board will receive the district’s first-ever equity study, which is expected to further illuminate districtwide disparities.

Dr. Mathias has been a strong advocate for these programs and for this study. On the AISD Board, he will continue to advocate for the creation of policies and for the allocation of resources to address these issues. Under his leadership, all District 2 schools in East Austin have been lifted from “improvement required” status.

Answer 3: Notwithstanding the uneven playing field created by legislators for public schools & charter schools, so many great things are happening in our public schools, and countless AISD schools are outperforming local charter schools. For this reason, we allocated resources this year for spreading word of our public schools and their programs. A certain myth suggests that charter schools provide students choice; our district has responded by offering a portfolio of public schools with rich options in each. As one campaign suggests: “The closer you get [to our public schools], the better they look!”

Answer 4: Despite growth in some areas, the AISD is projected to continue decreasing in enrollment. Dr. Mathias has long maintained that the AISD has enough seats for our students, but that they’re not in the right places. A massive attempt at “right-sizing” is needed. Crucial community conversations must be held on politically-unpopular options in this respect, versus the desire to maintain the status quo, which has resulted in the over-enrollment & under-enrollment of schools in differing parts of the city. Our city is dynamic; our district must creatively respond to this dynamism.

Answer 5: Dr. Mathias’ has a proven record of engaging the District 2 community. He hosted 20 school tours & community conversations last year, and he is hosting another 20 conversations this year. His cell number (512.826.0280) is public, and he publishes a regular constituent communication. His website (www.jaymemathias.com) contains a wealth of information for constituents, including calendars of events and his voting record. Two of Dr. Mathias’ priorities have been transparency & community engagement.

Answer 6: The aforementioned “right-sizing” of the AISD poignantly affects District 2, where many East Austin schools are underenrolled, and many Dove Springs schools are overenrolled. Dr. Mathias plans to continue engaging the community around possible solutions to this. He has also committed himself to the continued academic improvement of District 2 schools. Having turned around Eastside Memorial High School in 2015 and Martin Middle School in 2016, his attention is now on rallying community support for the turnaround of Mendez Middle School in Dove Springs, where he serves as a tutor with APIE.

DISTRICT 5

Amber Elenz
Unopposed

DISTRICT 3

Ann Teich
Unopposed

DISTRICT 7

Yasmin Wagner
Unopposed

AT LARGE 8

Cindy Anderson
Background: I have over a decade of experience as a parent & full-time volunteer serving AISD, specifically solving problems to improve outcomes for ALL students.

Education: I have a BA from Indiana University. I’ve served on many district-level committees at AISD learning operations, Legislative efforts and priorities.

Campaign website: http://www.cindyforaisd.com/

Answer 1: We have to prioritize investments in several areas: teachers/staffing, Pre-K, academic/resource support for high needs students, innovative curriculum & technology integration in the classroom that will prepare ALL of our students to be highly skilled and competitive for college, career and life. It’s also important to verify that we are investing proportionally in our commitment to not just bridging, but eliminating achievement gaps. We must also continue to identify and leverage external resources, and continue exploring a tax swap/partnerships with other local taxing entities.

Answer 2: Parent Support Specialists are one of the most critical connections to our families, and a key link in providing the support that families need. Their pay grade is undervalued relative to the job and needs to be addressed as well as guaranteeing full-time status from year to year. We should consider a staffing allocation model for the PSS to student ratio like we have for the majority of our campus staffing positions. We need to create more opportunities for students to learn about careers. Resource allocation must strategically and proportionally support our students with the highest needs.

Answer 3: We need to understand why families are leaving AISD or not enrolling and address areas of concern. We have to provide exceptional customer service and make certain that ALL of our schools are high performing and offer rigorous and innovative curriculum. This requires particular attention focused on providing advanced academic options and innovative courses at every campus. It also means a strong focus on transitions, especially from elementary to middle school, making parents feel comfortable and informed about what to expect. We educate students better and need to excel at telling our story.

Answer 4: For overcrowding issues, we will need to construct new additions to existing schools and build more schools. Regarding under-enrolled schools, potential solutions depend on which factors are contributing to their enrollment situation. Some areas are more impacted than others by affordability, gentrification, aging populations and couples without children, which means fewer children. We need to continue to collaborate with our campus communities to add programs that can attract students from other areas to boost enrollment. Other areas have more competition where aggressive marketing is key.

Answer 5: Communicating in a way that is specifically relevant to and differentiated for individual stakeholders is a top priority. Trustees have to spend time in the community, visiting schools, attending events, and spending time interacting with families. This establishes open channels of communication and facilitates the creation of mechanisms for ongoing dialog that meets the needs of our campuses and neighborhoods. I will leverage the connections I’ve made in my volunteer roles in AISD while continuing to expand this network and by being visible and engaged in the community.

Answer 6: We have to recruit and retain the highest quality teachers and staff. Achievement gaps still need to be addressed in some of our student demographic groups, as does a continued history of over-identification of special education and behavior referrals. More professional development, including cultural sensitivity training, is needed along with increased focus and regularly scheduled checkpoints. We need to collaborate better with our local employers and educational partners to continue to design and align curriculum that will produce a highly skilled, competitive workforce.

David Quintanilla

Background: Product of AISD, kids in AISD. PTA Secretary, Board Member of Marathon Kids, Hospice Austin, and 7 years with the Council on At-Risk Youth

Education: Masters in Philosophy and Public Policy from The London School of Economics, Law degree from St. Mary’s University, Government degree from UT Austin

Campaign website: http://www.davidforaisd.com/

Answer 1: On the revenue side, we have to continue to look at creative and innovative ways to minimize the effects of recapture. This year we will lose over $400 million to this outdated program. Even a small offset, with a tax swap for instance, could pay for an across the board pay raise of 10% for all AISD employees. With regards to our costs, just like in my business, it’s all about people, because they are the key. We need to prioritize recruiting/retaining the best employees above other things like the newest gadget, which have their place, but do not have the same impact as a great teacher.

Answer 2: Every decision we make as a board must be measured against this question: How does this help those students who face the most hurdles? To be sure, Austin’s economic output is growing, but not everyone is benefiting from this growth. 60% of AISD students are economically disadvantaged. We have to open the doors of opportunity for these students or we will be failing in our obligation to the future. Moreover, with regards to diversity, AISD is 60% Latino, but we are looking at the possibility of having a board with only 11% Latino representation. We must be honest about why this persists.

Answer 3: We must refresh our brand to be about innovation, community, and a diverse educational experience to attract and retain kids and families. For all their marketing efforts, the reality is that on balance, charter schools perform no better than public schools. We have to get our message to parents aggressively, but in a manner that resonates with them. We have
to decide what we stand for as a city, and if the vision is for a more unified and just community then we will need to do the hard work to make it a reality.

**Answer 4:** The answer on some of these challenges will often not be easy, but the approach does not have to be that complicated. We must allocate resources effectively and be willing to anger a few people to reach the goals of an entire campus. That is how you move the needle on things. We cannot simply take a one-size fits all approach. My experience as a business owner, attorney, and PTA member has taught me that you cannot make everyone happy, but you have to be willing to work with everyone to seek the best overall solutions.

**Answer 5:** As an At-Large trustee it is imperative that I hear from a broad spectrum of voices. Rather than field questions and comments only from activist parents I will make an effort to engage the working mom who barely has time to make it to the pick up line at 2:57pm. Her perspective as a parent and community member is just as important as the PTA president. Additionally, my diversity of experience allows me to walk comfortably in many different circles; this will serve me well as I work with parents and community members from across town.

**Answer 6:** Recruiting/retaining the most talented employees and our approach to diversity. We must work hard for our teachers and all AISD employees, just as they work hard for our children. I am honored to have the support of Education Austin and the Central Labor Council. Our success depends upon having talented and engaged leaders in front of our kids each and every day. We must also be bold in our discussions concerning diversity. We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go. Diversity is not about minimizing an individual weakness, it is about maximizing our collective strength.

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**Travis County**

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AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Question 1:** Since ACC now covers 3 counties and multiple cities and Independent School Districts (ISDs), what problems or roadblocks to governance or adequate representation of our ISD’s do you see arise from the at-large election of Trustees?

**Question 2:** With decreasing funding from the state, how can the district maintain funding levels to support necessary programs with minimum increase in taxes or tuition for students?

**Question 3:** As Trustee, what could be done to improve ACC’s graduation rates, as well as meet the challenges for preparing students for needed workforce jobs?

**Question 4:** In your opinion, what other issues are important and what would you suggest for action on those issues?

**PLACE 4**

**Sean Hassan**

**Background:** Professional in the education field. Husband to Zahra who is a non-profit professional working with domestic violence survivors. Father of a baby boy.

**Education:** Stanford Law School, J.D.; London School of Economics, MSc Management of NGOs (Non-Profits) - Tufts University, BA International Relations

**Campaign website:** seanforacc.com

**Answer 1:** One potential issue with at-large seats in a large district is that the majority of Trustees could all be from the same part of the District, and not fully appreciate the needs and challenges of students, potential students, and community members living in other parts of the District. I’m committed, if elected, to spend as much time as feasible visiting all of the campuses on a regular basis, and meeting with leaders, community members, and students from the various cities and ISDs that are part of the District. This would, I hope, help us to balance needs that differ across the District.

**Answer 2:** One way to maintain funding levels without raising taxes or tuition is to increase enrollment. ACC has space. To increase enrollment, ACC has to reduce barriers that discourage individuals from enrolling. Many current and potential ACC students, for example, are working parents, unable to find affordable childcare for their children while the parent is in class. Many rely on inefficient public transportation to get to ACC, resulting in too many hours commuting. If we can reduce barriers, e.g., by offering affordable childcare on campus or working with CapMetro, we can increase enrollment.

**Answer 3:** The barriers for students I outlined above - lack of childcare, inefficient public transportation, and textbooks that are more expensive than they should be - all impact graduation rates. To increase graduation rates, I would work to reduce these barriers. As far as preparing students for the workforce, I would work to expand high school partnerships for vocational training programs. If students interested in vocational training can take ACC vocational courses in high school, they can complete their vocational programs at ACC more quickly after high school graduation and find jobs sooner.

**Answer 4:** In addition to what I have described above, I would expand ACC partnerships with high schools for dual credit programs. This will allow more students to obtain college credits before graduating high school, saving their parents some college tuition and possibly resulting in these students borrowing smaller student loans. I will also collaborate with the business community to explore ways for ACC students to get exposed to the skills they need for the jobs of the future. I’d like to learn from business about the skills that ACC should teach, so our graduates are prepared for tomorrow’s jobs.

**Michael J. Lewis**

**Background:** I am a first generation college graduate. I have been an auditor for 25 years at TEA & the Comptroller’s Office. Member of the ACC Advisory Committee.

**Education:** Master of Business Administration-Finance, Prairie View A&M University & Bachelor of Business Administration-Accounting, Prairie View A&M University

**Campaign website:** LewisforACC.com

**Answer 1:** Because of the area’s changing demographics due to gentrification and integration, our current system appears to be the most effective. Studying Austin’s 10-1 Plan could provide information for consideration. Decreasing state funding and the costs associated with instituting single-member districts, deem the current system fiscally responsible. However fiscal responsibility should not be the only factor. As ACC grows, we must ensure involvement from all communities to address their needs properly. Campus Advisory Committees, of which I am a member for the Northridge campus, could help.

**Answer 2:** With over 25 years as an auditor, I am experienced in examining budgeting, spending, saving, and investing practices. As Trustee, I would suggest a performance management review, conducted by the state, to look for more efficient ways of spending ACC funds. Additionally, I would continue to apply for grants from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and other Texas state agencies, that apply another source of income than state appropriations.

**Answer 3:** According to the ACC 2015 Student Success Outcomes Report; degree, certification and other completions increased 71 percent overall from AY2010 to AY2015. Although ACC’s degree and certification rate still remains below the state and national averages, the district instituted two initiatives that should address the low completion rate and career preparation. The two initiatives are the Guided Pathways and the Required Student Success Course. Implementation of this program just started this fall semester so as Trustee I would like to give these two initiatives an opportunity to succeed.

**Answer 4:** Based on my own experience and what I’ve learned on the Northridge Campus Advisory Committee, the inability to purchase textbooks is one of the barriers that impacts student performance. I believe that access to low-cost books and materials is one of the ways to improve the retention and graduation rate. As a Trustee, I would lead the charge in developing a program to subsidize textbooks and course supplies so that students have the proper materials to matriculate effectively.

**George Robinson III**

**Background:** Multi gen Austinite. Board member. Local home owner 25 yrs. ACC student. Partner in 132 year local business employs 100+. Lot of experience allows me to walk comfortably in and must be educated to the needs of that community in limited time. Campus issues like administration, transportation, coarse offerings, workforce training, ISD and businesses partnerships get overlooked
because success metrics of ACC overshadow campus metrics.

Answer 2: Since the cost of living is high in the city of Austin, avoiding increases in tuition and/or taxes is crucial. Funding levels can be increased by increasing tax base through annexing other ISD’s which ACC is servicing, increasing student retention with new programs such as Guided Pathways, and creating demand (students) thru marketing, and partnerships with businesses, workforce commission, and other schools (ISD’s and colleges). Public/private partnerships which provide funding from employers needing specific training or on-site training should also be pursued where legally possible.

Answer 3: I support heavy investment in Guided Pathways program which provides counseling in desired pathways of education and employable programs. Trustees can promote relationships with workforce commissions, political factions, and private/public employers. Greater Austin is a high demand/high cost city. Trustees can influence program creation which enhances work/study lifestyle by increasing transportation/childcare options, and working campuses (low cost housing, employment, services nearby). Creation of accelerated programs requiring fewer years towards graduation also increases success rates.

Answer 4: I’m concerned that wearing too many hats–transfer school, trade school, advanced high school, specialized courses, re-training, possible baccalaureate, workforce training, etc. is spreading ACC thin on manageable resources. I’m also concerned that ACC’s expanding too rapidly to get the teacher and course infrastructure in place and that retention of good teachers will be difficult due to competition from other schools and Austin businesses. The board must continue demanding a high degree or reporting and mandate policy changes when there are negative trends.

Nicole Eversmann

Background: I recently left a full time position as a Business Financial Administrator to focus more on school. Before working there, I was a pharmacy technician.

Education: Student at Austin Community College since fall of 2013. ACC Futures Institute Member 2015-’16. Graduated from Westwood High School in Round Rock ISD.

Campaign website: www.nicoleforacc.com

Answer 1: Since Trustees are elected at-large across the expansive Austin Community College District, the race itself can deter people from running. Trying to campaign across the entire district can be a demanding and expensive process. The greater Austin community cannot be adequately represented under these circumstances. If Trustees were to instead be elected regionally, it would allow each race to become more local and hopefully prove to be more representative of the diverse communities within the ACC District.

Answer 2: ACC has been striving to create an alumni network. Many universities draw significant funding from alumni donations, and this is a resource ACC could try tapping into.

Another consideration to impact funding levels would be expanding the district. Students out of district pay significantly more to attend ACC. Out of district tuition is as costly as some four-year universities would be. By welcoming more neighborhoods into the district, ACC would increase their tax revenue and create opportunities for more students to attend at lower tuition costs.

Answer 3: Many transfer students don’t graduate from ACC before moving on because ACC’s degree plans do not align with transferable requirements from four-year schools. I would like to work on strengthening the articulation agreements with four-year schools so that our students’ time and money can be spent effectively, supporting timely graduation.

ACC has countless resources available to students, but not everyone knows where to find what they need. I want to support the implementation of guided pathways, which will provide more direct access and support to students on both academic and workforce paths.

Answer 4: From my experience with the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society and researching community colleges—especially as a member of ACC’s Futures Institute—I’ve learned that student success is most strongly correlated with a student’s sense of belonging and establishing interpersonal connections. ACC should prioritize the establishment of an early alert system, allowing students who are falling behind to be contacted directly.

Another important issue is that ACC should set a living wage for all employees. This will be instrumental in improving the lives of each employee and the atmosphere of the college.

Thomas Miranda

Background: Attended Community College + UTSA, earned BSEE degree, spent career in R&D/IT w Fortune 50’s. Served on 12 Austin 501(c)3 boards, Fmr chairman GAHCC.


Campaign website: www.mirandaForACC.com

Answer 1: ACC’s Fortune2000 like, given that it’s a 12 campus, $340M+/ yr enterprise w/ 70k students by 2022. ACC resource demands & sheer volume of students estimated to enroll by 2022, coupled with the many ISD’s in the region, will likely need to tightly focus on regions or campus to ISD (to industry) alignment. Roadblocks would likely be on resource allocation/management of guided pathways, dual credit and Academy partnerships. Overruns in resources or misalignment due to changes in ISD’s in the region will need to tightly focus on regions or campus to ISD to industry alignment. Blending of ISD’s in the region will likely need to tightly focus on regions or campus to ISD to industry alignment. Roadblocks could likely be on resource allocation/management of guided pathways, dual credit and Academy partnerships.

Answer 2: Innovative private sector partnerships, 501(c)3 nonprofits and public entities will allow for some initial relief from state funding while improving quality of programming offered. My professional experience of enabling customer satisfaction, value & outcomes across multiple divisions in Fortune50 environments, qualifies me to champion this. The college can achieve an effective bottom line while improving the quality of programming/value offered to students. Convening the private sector to get engaged, optimizing ACC’s business model and seeing through successful outcomes is a goal of mine.

Answer 3: I would work to strengthen and optimize guided pathways while forming strong partnerships with nonprofits and the private sector to address the range of financial, mobile and healthcare needs aimed at reducing barriers to entry/success. Furthermore, I would work to create innovative private sector partnerships programs (like Einstein project) that engage students earlier in the ISD cycle through internships and/or mentorship opportunities so as to have a vested interest in the early success of students all the way through to job placement and/or industry skill matching.

Answer 4: Economic Opportunity

-Socioeconomic challenges growing up on the Southside of San Antonio, working my way through to community college then a computer engineering degree, then spending my entire professional career in a Fortune50 globalized workforce environment compels me to enable economic opportunity for many.

Access – So many obstacles get in the way of students accessing higher education and perhaps specialized careers, like nursing.

Developing campus to campus shuttle solutions with CapMetro is one of many such examples of a solution to help remove obstacles such as mobility.

Anthony Schoggins

Background: Anthony worked for State Senator Rodney Ellis for multiple sessions; He worked multiple policy areas including Higher Education, specifically funding.

Education: Westwood and Leander HS St. Edwards University

Campaign website: www.anthonyuschoggins.com

Answer 1: Currently the at-large election of trustees creates geographic minorities or areas of the taxing and service district that do not receive equitable representation. I promise to listen to every part of the community as a part of my decision-making and be available to my constituency every step of the way during my six-year term of office. If fortunate enough to serve as ACC Trustee #5, I will be a faithful steward of both your tax dollar and the office I am asking to be elected to. This type of servant leadership is the only way to combat the potential underrepresentation of ISD’s.

Answer 2: I have committed to not supporting a ballot initiative tax-increase in 2018. First, we cannot give any ground on the grants and funding strategies currently in place for low and middle income families. ACC must improve graduation, retention, and recruitment metrics. These metrics are some of the only outcomes that exist to prove ACC is worthy of increased funding from the legislature. With new funding streams and grant dollars being considered, like offering a community college a BSN in nursing, ACC must have the outcomes to support a request for increased legislative funding.

Answer 3: ACC must reduce the systemic roadblocks to success. Transportation, childcare, and healthcare are three areas that the Board can provide immediate relief to students and faculty. ACC must also do a better job of connecting our students and graduates with support structures that currently exist in the business community. The quality of our partnerships with community and business entities are a direct indicator of ACC’s quality of workforce development. I will also work to increase the number of articulation agreements with other universities so that students can truly start here to get there.

Answer 4: Campus carry does not mean campus carry. As Trustee, I won’t need a weapon to protect our shared values.
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When Madison and Jefferson helped create the University of Virginia they too banned guns on campus. I’ll be in good company in opposing campus carry. There is also a very serious legal question that needs to be answered on this policy regarding dual-enrollment high school students on college campuses and the legality of guns on campus with minors.

ACC must get more faculty enrolled in the public service student loan forgiveness program; a program that has no cost to the college.

PLACE 6

Nora De Hoyos Comstock

Background: Nora de Hoyos Comstock, national founder, Las Comadres Para Las Americas, President/CEO until 2015. Chair, Workforce Dev Bd 1999.


College Leadership

Campaign website: www.noraforaccplace6.com

Answer 1: Difficulty of getting to all the communities to meet the voters and get their input on their education needs and what they believe ACC should do to to improve services to their specific communities.

Answer 2: Costs of campaigning in such a large area, both time and money. The costs may discourage potential qualified board members from actually filing for a seat on the board.

Answer 3: At-large elections are much harder for folks that do not have the resources to campaign over such a large area. This means that lower income progressives are unable to run. Many students at ACC are low income, and progressives are unable to run. Many students at ACC are low income, and the number of students struggling. It is important that we have a better board member in the race.

Answer 4: We must look at where our money is going, and ask ourselves how these courses off campus (e.g., current ACC/Samsung partnership)

Answer 3: ACC must aggressively execute its Guided Pathways initiative and articulate a set of metrics that measure success in terms of degrees and workforce credentials. It is also critical that ACC Faculty and Staff are fully engaged on this issue. I fully support the conclusions and recommendations of the 2016 ACC/Austin Chamber of Commerce Progress Towards Excellence Report, which states that “ACC must prepare workers to fill high skill, high wage jobs in industries such as information technology, healthcare and advanced manufacturing” and must also “develop new and accelerated credential pathways.”

Answer 4: ACC must continue to leverage relationships and input from the business community and build partnerships with the major employers in the District. ACC must also reduce the ratio of full-time and adjunct faculty, who are 9/10 of the faculty and teach 55% of the course load. ACC must possess the knowledge and relationships of Commerce in the ACC District. An ACC Trustee must be a regional advocate and other elected officials, business leaders and other stakeholders such as Chambers of Commerce in the ACC District. An ACC Trustee must be a regional advocate and possess the knowledge and relationships necessary to truly represent the entire district. As a former City Councilmember I have worked with legislators, county and city officials, ISD trustees and business leaders across the ACC District on a wide variety of policy issues.

Answer 2: The FY 2017 budget is $342 million and 52% of the revenues come from property taxes, 27.5%- tuition and fees, and 17.8%-state appropriations (unlikely to increase). ACC assumes annual 5% growth in property tax revenue for the next decade - a risky assumption. The only number that ACC truly controls is the revenue generated from tuition and fees which means that ACC must increase enrollment, but not increase tuition. This can be achieved by increasing utilization rates on its campuses and offering more courses on weekends and teaching

Douglas Gibbins

Background: Vice Chair, ACC Highland Campus Advisory Committee; Finance and Investment Banking - Deloitte, Morgan Stanley, Accenture; Commercial Real Estate Broker

Education: University of Texas at Austin - MBA, MS Engineering, BS Electrical Engineering

Campaign website: www.DouglasGibbins.com

Answer 1: The at-large election of Trustees is a structural means to have ACC be the nonpartisan institution serving our entire community it is chartered to be. By design it places an obligation on those we elect as Trustees to serve us to represent the entire district and service area. The at-large election method encourages our community to elect Trustees who see and act on the big picture, not those beholden to special interests, political party operatives, or narrow or self-serving agendas.

I am the independent candidate. I am not a partisan politician driving to insert national ideological and geographic constituencies. I do possess the knowledge and relationships necessary to truly represent the entire district. As a former City Councilmember I have worked with legislators, county and city officials, ISD trustees and business leaders across the ACC District on a wide variety of policy issues.

Answer 2: ACC benefits from both more people and business moving here as well as increasing property value assessments. This results in increasing tax revenues without increasing the tax rate. This is a large benefit ACC enjoys. I strongly support a public vote on changes to tax rates.

The amount of funding from the state or federal government is not on a fixed, pre-determined trajectory. By making the case to the public of the value of ACC and lobbying our legislators at the state and national level, additional financial support can be obtained.

Answer 3: The number of students graduating from ACC increased by about 70% over the last five years. It’s a remarkable achievement indicating good policies and programs are in place to continue increasing the number of graduates from just under 6,000 last year. As a Trustee I will achieve further improvements to ACC’s graduation figures by improving the Guided Pathways program, class counseling, skills assessment and student outreach. One of my goals as your ACC Trustee is to increase the number of yearly graduates to more than 12,000.

Answer 4: I will benefit our community through this volunteer position as an ACC Trustee through good financial management. While working as a management consultant and investment banker I was a part of teams advising the boards and senior management of large organizations - Mobil, Sony, Tenneco, GEICO. I understand how high performing boards work.

ACC has over $400 million of local tax payer dollars being invested in construction projects. Our community will benefit from my deep understanding of the real estate development process from leading a commercial real estate firm and developing real estate.

Mitch Fuller

Background: Former Cedar Park Mayor Pro Tem and City Councilmember (2007-2014); Iraq War Veteran (awarded Bronze Star); former political science college professor

Education: ABD in Political Science, University of Missouri-Kansas City: MPA, University of Oklahoma BA in Political Science, Southwestern Okla. State University

Campaign website: www.mitchfulleraccplace9.com

Answer 1: ACC is a regional institution. ACC Trustees represent a broad range of ideological and geographic constituencies and must have solid relationships with other elected officials, business leaders and other stakeholders such as Chambers of Commerce in the ACC District. An ACC Trustee must be a regional advocate and possess the knowledge and relationships necessary to truly represent the entire district. As a former City Councilmember I have worked with legislators, county and city officials, ISD trustees and business leaders across the ACC District on a wide variety of policy issues.

Answer 2: The FY 2017 budget is $342 million and 52% of the revenues come from property taxes, 27.5%- tuition and fees, and 17.8%-state appropriations (unlikely to increase). ACC assumes annual 5% growth in property tax revenue for the next decade - a risky assumption. The only number that ACC truly controls is the revenue generated from tuition and fees which means that ACC must increase enrollment, but not increase tuition. This can be achieved by increasing utilization rates on its campuses and offering more courses on weekends and teaching

Julie Ann Nitsch

Background: Julie Ann Nitsch is a passionate advocate of social justice with deep ties to the ACC community both as a student and as a staff member.

Education: I am a former student of ACC, and I will be resuming my educational goals this January at Texas State University.

Campaign website: www.julienitsch.com

Answer 1: At large elections are much harder for folks that do not have the resources to campaign over such a large area. This means that lower income progressives are unable to run. Many students at ACC are low income, and struggling. It is important that we have a board member that understands, and can relate to the issues our students face. When a candidate must have thousands of dollars to win such a large election it reduces the opportunity for adequate representation. Currently most board members live in North Austin, effecting geographic and economic representation.

Answer 2: We must look at where our money is going, and ask ourselves how these programs benefit our unique demographic. I would focus on spending more money in

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**Travis County**

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the learning labs and on text books and less money on Student Life. Most of our students are part time adults with jobs and families, we don’t need to keep them on campus for social events. We could better serve our students by building coalitions with Austin groups to further our students educational opportunities.

**Answer 3: Austin Community College should provide access to affordable health care. Many students are not insured, and even if they are, do not have the time or money to attain healthcare. One of the most important health needs for students is reproductive health. By providing access to affordable child care, Austin Community College can raise the rate of graduation, reduce the amount of time students take to graduate, and benefit faculty and staff members.**

Austin Community College needs better access to public transportation, and students need to have access to all ACC campuses.

**Answer 4: Educators are some of the most important members of our society. They deserve health care benefits and a living wage. Like most institutions of higher education, Austin Community College has reduced benefits and full time positions for professors. Supporting our faculty is the best way to support students and raise graduation rates.**

Guadalupe Sosa

**Background:** Serving in ACC Board of Trustees Place 6 since May 2010. Resident of District since May 1977. Involved in community and civic affairs since 1968.

**Education:** B.A. 1975 –Our Lady of the Lake University, San Antonio, TX; graduate coursework at University of Houston-Victoria Campus; Accounting/Business at ACC.

**Campaign website:** www.lupesosa.com

**Answer 1:** The ACC District serves 30 ISDs in 6 counties, but only the residents in 6 ISDs, from Leander, Round Rock, and Elgin to Manor, Del Valle, Buda, and Kyle, and the City of Austin can vote in ACC elections. There is much disparity in social status and education in the area. A majority of Trustees tend to live in the wealthiest central west and far northwest part of the district, thus the Board has limited personal awareness of the cultural or educational needs of the south and east part of the District. Single districts can produce a culturally diverse Board and less expensive candidate elections

**Answer 2:** The Board needs to ensure that those who do not pay taxes to the District pay for the cost of their education, including Dual Credit and Early College High School programs. The cost for these programs keeps going up every year. Many of these students do not attend ACC after graduating from high school or plan to transfer quickly. If the state is not willing to pay for the cost of assisting ISDs with HB 5 implementation, then the Board needs to get the ISD to pay if outside of taxing district. Small increases in taxes may be better than large increases in tuition for better economic progress.

**Answer 3:** ACC’s graduation rates have increased every year, but students can do better. Low persistence and retention are big problems in our area. 78% of students attend part time. ACC is competing with job and family obligations that get in the way of persistence, even when students want to graduate. Board policies need to support the CEO in building partnerships with social service providers to meet students’ need for counseling, transportation, food, rent, and child care to ensure students stay in school, and to help more of them graduate, or get the training for the higher paying jobs they want.

**Answer 4:** The college has been increasing accessibility and support for non-traditional students, but it needs to maximize the use of the weekend college campuses with more useful programming for these students.

**Jeremy Story**

**Background:** Jeremy has worked with college campuses, students and faculty across the nation for over 20 years. He has also run 2 nationwide businesses.

**Education:** Bachelors Degree from the University of Texas At Austin in Government

**Campaign website:** www.jeremystory.org

**Answer 1:** The size of ACC’s district is growing. It is now beyond the size of many congressional districts. As ACC expands the district this problem will only grow. It requires a significant amount of funding and time for candidates to deeply involve themselves in the whole district. ACC should look into using a mixture of at large and single member district places for board members rather than all at large seats.

**LEANDER ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Question 1:** Given State cuts to education and increased costs (employee healthcare, salaries, energy) what should be the ISD’s budget approach and how/where do we find the funds to meet our needs?

**Question 2:** Some school communities complain of “overcrowding” at their campus and some schools are “under-enrolled.” What should be the District’s response to this duality?

**Question 3:** If you believe that School Board Trustees have a responsibility to be accessible to the community, what steps would you take to ensure that you are accessible to and communicating with members of your district?

**Question 4:** What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

**PLACE 3**

Chris Remy

**Background:** I have three children in LISD schools (grades 2, 4 and 6). I have a business background and am an education activist fighting for local control.

**Education:** BA, University of Michigan MBA, University of Massachusetts

**Campaign website:** facebook.com/ChrisForLISD

**Answer 1:** My top priority will always be to maintain and improve the educational experience of all children in LISD, which means directing funds to where they will benefit the students and teachers in the classroom. Cost-cutting should come in reducing wasteful spending or overhead, never programs that enable the academic excellence for which LISD is known.

**Answer 2:** In LISD, our continuing growth will put pressure on school populations, especially in the northern part of the district. We will need new schools at every level, and we should build them. The top priority is to build and pay for these schools responsibly, without making the mistakes of the past that have lead to LISD’s current unsustainable level of debt. LISD does have schools that are below capacity in some neighborhoods, creating an interesting opportunity for specialty education programs, in-district charters or other re-purposing.

**Answer 3:** This is an area where Leander ISD has the most need for improvement, and the one that inspired me to run for the Board of Trustees. The community feel of our schools is what parents love about LISD and what gives them the expectation that their Board will be the same way. Your Board Trustees should be service-minded

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and responsive to requests, problems and complaints from parents and taxpayers. I will be accessible personally, but more importantly I will be responsive on the Board. So many people say they have given up on bringing issues to the Board. I want to reverse this trend.

**Answer 1:** Fiscally conservative approach focusing on students first. Staff consist of 85% of the budget leaving 15% available for new programs and other needs. Partnerships with ACC and Concordia and use of technology allows LISD to be creative and offer students’ options. Partnering with LISD’s Educational Foundations and business relationships have covered additional needs. PTAs and Booster Clubs are important groups on all our campuses.

**Answer 2:** Leander ISD is a fast growth district covering 200 miles and growth is not consistent across the district. Parents do not like busing children out of neighborhood schools, so LISD’s approach is to review our demographic report annually and long-term planning. We know where growth happens and what schools need relief. If we need to adjust school populations, we allow for plenty of parent voices and come up with a solution best for their needs.

**Answer 3:** A School Board Trustee should be the most accessible elected official in a community. We are responsible for setting tax rates, educational policy, and most importantly the security and well-being of your children. I take these charges very seriously every day. I am accessible by phone, email, attend school events regularly, and I have never turned down anyone who has wanted to meet with me. We hold coffee with the board quarterly and I have hosted my own coffee time. My Facebook account is available to anyone who wants to read it, comment it, or ask me any question.

**Answer 4:** The curriculum and how it is administered to students is my #1 issue. Leander ISD wants all students educated to their top abilities, so we scheduled a curriculum and gifted and talented audit of our system. These are deficit audits and will be very detailed as to any and all shortcomings, but I believe you cannot improve until you take a hard look at what you are doing. Digital security of our students is a high priority and we addressing this by a committee of experts and parents recommending outcomes on how to keep our students safe. Advocating for student needs with the legislature.

**PLACE 4**

**Grace Barber Jordan**

**Background:** Current Place 4 Trustee, LISD, room mother, Destination Imagination team manager and literacy in schools partner.

**Education:** B.A., English, Texas A&M University; M.Ed., Higher Education, DBU; M.A., Counseling, St. Edward’s

**Campaign website:** www.barberjordan.com

**Answer 1:** I have always worked with the board to strike a balance of hiring talented teachers, funding the programs that will improve our children’s education and maintaining the schools to provide a welcome and safe place for students to learn.

**Answer 2:** Our community has told us that they highly value neighborhood schools so children can go to school where they live. This has been the foundation guiding where we place schools.

**Answer 3:** A strong influence in a growing district like LISD is that demographics change and this changes school enrollments over time. I am committed to neighborhood schools, too. But like any program, I am also willing to revisit the model if community priorities change.

**Answer 4:** I value the input I get from people in the district. People contact me via multiple channels (Facebook, phone, at the grocery store, LISD’s 24 hour electronic communication) about a wide range of topics. Some of the ideas have risen to board agenda items for discussion.

**Scott Rowe**

**Background:** I’m a father with children attending schools in the district, a CPA, a former city foundation CFO/board member and your future advocate.

**Education:** Bachelor of Science in Accounting, BYU Master of Science in Taxation, Golden Gate University

**Campaign website:** www.facebook.com/Scott4LISD4

**Answer 1:** As a CPA, I believe in fiscal responsibility. To me, that really means we need to analyze spending and reevaluate whether each dollar spent is bringing value to our students and best prepares our diverse students for life after high school. And we cannot forget about our teachers. It is very frustrating to do good and have something or someone stand in your way. We need to ensure our teachers have what they need to be great teachers.

**Answer 2:** Our district knows about rapid growth and new campus construction. But after facilities are built, the utilization conversation continues. Zoning changes are disruptive to our children, families, and staff and should be avoided where possible in favor of stability. With these decisions, communication and transparency is key and there is often no easy answer. The optimal solution is to ensure the building decisions are done correctly up front.

**Answer 3:** I know I need to stay connected with the community in making decisions. I also realize that board members must not just attend board meetings, but actively participate, ask questions and stay involved. Having children at each school level means our discussions at home will provide frequent feedback to be better prepared to partner with our district leaders and community members to tackle issues together. Community members will know they have my attention and will always be a priority to me. I enjoy listening to the concerns of others, learning, and doing everything I can to find solutions.

**Answer 4:** Having my own agenda would be ineffective as a board member. As your rep, I’ve already heard several important themes in my conversations with district members that represent areas of consideration. Some parents and teachers have shared that children might benefit from an increased use of grouping children of similar abilities. Others have expressed concern about the pressures of our modern educational system and the resulting symptoms of stress seen in our children. The solutions to these and other concerns will come from transparent and robust study, feedback, communication and compromise.

**PLACE 5**

**Russell Bundy**

**Background:** Served in the U.S. Air Force and retired after 25+ years with the Texas Department of Public Safety. Currently work for the ACC District Police

**Education:** BA Criminal Justice – St. Edward’s University

**Campaign website:** www.voteforruss.com

**Answer 1:** Over 80% of any school district budget is contributed to the salaries of our teachers and support staff. We can always try to cut costs, without cutting value, of healthcare plans and use better energy efficient strategies. Cutting the costs of teachers and support personnel should not be one of those options we should risk.

The Texas Supreme Court found that the school finance system was constitutional but, the court also made it clear that “the system was undeniably imperfect, with immense room for improvement.” I will continue to communicate school priorities with our State Reps in 2017.

**Answer 2:** Leander ISD is a fast growth district that experiences more overcrowded schools than under-enrolled schools. Due to this fast growth the school district...
Answer 1: Our number one priority should be reducing our $3.4 Billion debt. Next year LISD will spend $261,626.69 per day on debt service (22.6% of our total budget). Even with the tremendous growth in our District, the portion going to debt increases each year. I will work with our CFO on innovative ways to reduce spending while directing maximum funds towards teachers, students and classrooms. In addition I will advocate for reducing redundancies and inefficiencies as well as renegotiating all vendor contracts. I will also lead the fight to eliminate unfunded mandates from the State.

Answer 2: Certainly, class size and student-teacher ratios are important factors in quality education. As LISD continues to enjoy healthy growth we may need to adjust school boundaries based on seat availability. This is an emotionally-charged topic and to be successful we need to engage and involve parents in that process early. I think that, by and large, LISD has done a good job of managing capacity. However I look forward to utilizing my experience in process improvement to bring fresh perspective to managing growth, class sizes and teacher-student ratios.

Answer 3: I have been a vocal and visible advocate of our community for several years. From maintaining a social media site offering the latest facts and analysis on issues affecting Leander ISD to speaking with State Representatives about public education policy; I have developed a reputation for asking sometimes difficult questions and sharing the results with the community. Being on the Board of Trustees is entirely about customer service to the residents. I will immediately motion the LISD Board to allow public comment on agenda items during the time that particular item is being discussed.

Answer 4: Restore local control of our children’s education; put an end to high-stakes testing. Support and protect teachers; reject any attempt to tie assessments of educators to student performance on standardized tests. Customer service; ‘I’d make it easier for parents to engage, connect and participate in the governance of our District. Be a good steward of our tax dollars - continually assess how we do business and look for opportunities to streamline processes. Eliminate inefficiencies and redundancies. Create and enhance partnerships with local industry to expand and strengthen Vocational Ed.
**Travis County**

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**Answer 4:** Our city will see unprecedented growth over the next several decades. As the 11th fastest growing city in the nation we can’t fight growth and we can’t ignore it. Private landowners sell to private developers and growth occurs with or without our involvement. The most critical thing for myself and our city council is to get in front of that growth with comprehensive and intuitive strategies for how growth will occur. Growth in a city can be compared to raising a teenager in your home. You can’t stop it from growing but you can certainly influence it and guide it along its path of maturity.

**Phil Osars-Emia**  
**Background:** Honorary Member of President Barack Obama’s Kitchen Cabinet: Appointed Aug 3, 2009, reappointed July 16, 2013. Contractor with USPS since 1994  
**Education:** College of Aeronautical & Petroleum Engineering, Athens Greece, 4 yrs. 3 yrs Physician Asst - Educational Ctr (Thompson Institute) Phil. PA.  
**Answer 1:** In 20 years, the transportation infrastructure will looks like: all the traffic sign cum all street sign will be Computerized, Gas stations will have batteries Changers. Many Vehicles in our roads will be drive themselves. We will have driverless cars moving in our street. The actions I will take to move towards this vision is to make sure all street sign, roads sign are Computerized, and traffic sign are ready to face this complex challenges  
**Answer 2:** The specific programs that I will support to improve race relationship is the President Obama Task Force on 21st century Policing Reports, this task force will provide meaningful solutions to help law enforcement agencies and Communities, Strengthen Trust and Collaboration:- (1) Building Trust and Legitimacy (2) Policy and Oversight (3) Community Policing and Crime Reduction (4) Training and Education (5) Officer Wellness and Safety.  
**Answer 3:** In these troubled times, what I will do to assure my Citizens as a Mayor that they are well protected by our Police force, fireman, emergency services, and hospitals. Let them have transparency to the ways we hire highly qualified. Police, Fireman, Emergency services and Hospital personnel and 21st century Police. Fireman, and Emergency Services training. Have once a month drilling within the Police, Fireman, Emergency services and Hospital personnel and this must be televise on our local TV finally work in hand with Home Land Security.  
**Answer 4:** Higher Taxes vis-a-vis properties taxes Pflugerville as a city have a higher taxes and properties taxes. compared to its surround city, like Austin, Round Rock etc have a lower taxes  
First things I will do to reduce this higher taxes is to look at the area’s were there are wastage and look what other surround city are doing well that makes their taxes lower than our city and make sure this higher taxes stop so that we will create lower tax Climates which indicates a healthy local economy and let higher taxes which is a business killer be a foregone conclusion.

**JONESTOWN CITY COUNCIL**

**Question 1:** In twenty years, what do you hope the transportation infrastructure in your city looks like? What actions will you take during your term to move toward this vision?  
**Question 2:** What specific programs would you support to improve race relationships?  
**Question 3:** In these troubled times, what would you do to assure your citizens that they are well protected by the police force, firemen, emergency services, and hospitals?  
**Question 4:** What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

**ALDERMAN PLACE 3**

**Joe Aaron**  
**No response**

**Julia Carter**  
**Background:** I was born and raised in Jonestown my entire life, with the exception of five years spent in the College Station/ Houston area.  
**Education:** Bachelors of Business Administration in Finance from Texas A&M University, College Station  
**Campaign website:** N/A  
**Answer 1:** In the next two decades, I would like to see Jonestown’s transportation infrastructure support the growth that is happening at a rapid pace. My top priority is building the city a two way center turn lane all throughout the city on FM 1431, allowing traffic to fairly turn across oncoming traffic. In order to support this goal, I would attempt to set in motion a financial plan that would allow the city to fund such an expensive, long-term project.  
**Answer 2:** In order to improve race relationships, I would encourage all city government, police staff, and local employers to hire a diverse, well-educated staff.  
**Answer 3:** In order to support both the community and our police force, firemen, emergency services, and hospitals, I would encourage and speak out in support of our local services. If there were ever a conflict between our local services and our community, I would try to understand where the base of the conflict lies and work to improve that problem from the ground up.  
**Answer 4:** The biggest issue facing Jonestown is the transportation infrastructure. In the past, there have been decisions made and support by my opponent that have unnecessarily hurt our infrastructure and cost the citizens of Jonestown their hard-earned tax money. I would dedicate my term to ensure all future looking projects are well thought out, addressed, and have a positive impact on Jonestown.

**ALDERMAN PLACE 4**

**David Nelson**  
**Unopposed**

**ALDERMAN PLACE 5**

**Paul Johnson**  
**Background:** Present councilman, economic development, human resources, functional accounting, planning and zoning, extensive community service within the city.  
**Education:** Alvin Community College Wharton County Junior College College of the Mainland  
**Campaign website:** N/A  
**Answer 1:** Our city has developed and approved a master transportation plan which we are in process of implementing. The plan is designed to address current and future transportation needs. Our plan is reviewed and updated yearly.  
**Answer 2:** We are all Americans, and I support programs that bring us together as one community, and one nation, working together to be the best country possible for all people to live, work, raise a family and retire.  
**Answer 3:** Ensure open communication between citizens, city and first responders. Keeping citizens informed through all avenues of media. Support our law enforcement, and our emergency responders with the necessary resources to ensure a safe and secure community.  
**Answer 4:** Getting our emergency responders on to the major highway without being put in danger. Expand the city’s tax base by attracting new businesses. Sanitation infrastructure for the business corridor of the city. Getting our pedestrians safely across the 1431 roadway.  
**Answer 3:** We are working on plans that will address all the above issues for our community now, and in the future.

**James Quinn**  
**No response**
Question 1: In twenty years, what do you hope the transportation infrastructure in your city looks like? What actions will you take during your term to move toward this vision?

Background: Two years military, worked in the oilfield before earning a bachelor’s degree, resident of Volente since 1967.

Education: Bachelors degree in business.

Answer 1: Very much like today. The ditches and easements will be smoothed out for better drainage and mowing. The streets will have better base material and surface for reduced maintenance. The personality of the streets will be unchanged.

Answer 2: Whether residents are from different ethnic or religious groups or have different goals and beliefs, everyone should work together in a positive manner for the good of the community. I will work hard to create an atmosphere within our Village to accommodate this goal.

Answer 3: The residents of The Village of Volente understand well the strengths and weaknesses of their emergency services. I will work toward adjusting our ordinances to complement and aid our emergency services in protecting our citizens. I will work with other governmental entities to enhance and support our emergency services through interlocal service agreements, grants and education.

Answer 4: Stop the inflight and negativity. The Village of Volente is an old community that has always been lead by people who have its best interests at heart. We need to have open communications with our residents through Village provided newsletters, Village town hall meetings, and websites. Social media and private blogs are not productive means of Village/Residential communications.

Volente Mayor

Ken Beck

Unopposed
Travis County

PFLUGERVILLE CITY COUNCIL

**Question 1:** In twenty years, what do you hope the transportation infrastructure in your city looks like? What actions will you take during your term to move toward this vision?

**Answer 1:** Over 90% of Pflugerville have an independent form of transportation. While I cannot predict what Pflugerville will look like in 20 years, I hope to address the concern of transportation if the need arises. As of now, an overwhelming majority of our city does not need it and raising taxes for all to bring a transportation infrastructure for few would not be fair for our citizens.

**Answer 2:** I would encourage/grow the existing cultural programs that already exist into our schools, and integrate it into our city. Pflugerville schools is a melting pot of cultures. This is celebrated through different activities and clubs within the school. I want to create opportunities for citizens to meet while celebrating our city’s diversity. We cannot improve race relations by throwing money at it, but by educating ourselves of our neighbors. We should not place an undue burden on our citizens.

**Question 2:** What specific programs would you support to improve race relationships?

**Answer 3:** Our city loves our emergency services. Citizens are always looking for ways to support them. I believe the reason why we have such high approval ratings for our services is because of their relationship with our community. Having events such as the Police Department’s open house is a wonderful way for both our police and citizens to be connected to one another. I plan on continuing this relationship while opening up additional dialogues to help make our citizens and our men/women in uniforms more connected. By doing this, we can be safer knowing that our neighbors/friends have our backs.

**Question 3:** In these troubled times, what would you do to assure your citizens that they are well protected by the police force, firemen, emergency services, and hospitals?

**Answer 4:** Our greatest issue in Pflugerville is figuring out where the city needs to go in wake of its rapid growth. Pflugerville’s population has skyrocketed from 11,000 people a decade ago to roughly 60,000 now. Pflugerville needs a government that is able to adapt to these changes, address the new issues that will arise from this growth, and being careful to respect the city’s image. Pflugerville has been known as that small town families move to in order to escape the restlessness of Austin. We cannot forget them. The last thing families would want is to see the city become an extension of Austin.

**Answer 5:** While Pflugerville must figure out where the city needs to go in wake of its rapid growth, we need to work to ensure that our infrastructure supports our massive growth. We must work to ensure that our infrastructure supports our massive growth. We must also find ways to expand our borders so that all who rely on that new infrastructure contribute to the associated costs. The ongoing expansions should not place an undue burden on our citizens.

**Question 4:** What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

**Answer 6:** Our single most important issue I see is effectively managing the tremendous growth of the coming years. With all the great features of Pflugerville, hundreds of people move here each month and even more build homes just beyond our borders. We must work to ensure that our infrastructure supports our massive growth. We must also find ways to expand our borders so that all who rely on that new infrastructure contribute to the associated costs. The ongoing expansions should not place an undue burden on our citizens.
Williamson County

ROUND ROCK ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Question 1:** Given State cuts to education and increased costs (employee healthcare, salaries, energy) what should be the ISD’s budget approach and how/where do we find the funds to meet our needs?

**Question 2:** Some school communities complain of “overcrowding” at their campus and some schools are “under-enrolled.” What should be the District’s response to this duality?

**Question 3:** If you believe that School Board Trustees have a responsibility to be accessible to the community, what steps would you take to ensure that you are accessible to and communicating with members of your district?

**Question 4:** What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

**PLACE 7**

**Mason Moses**

**Background:** I am a proud product of Texas public schools, and the son of life-long educators. My wife is a graduate of Round Rock ISD, and we have two sons.

**Education:** Bachelor of Arts in Economics, North Texas University; Masters in Public Service Management, Texas A&M University; Masters in Public Administration - George H.W. Bush School of Government - Texas A&M University

**Campaign website:** www.masonmosesforrrisd.com

**Answer 1:** Every budget should begin with asking ourselves one question: what resources do we need to provide every child a quality education? We must work with those on the front-line; our teachers, campus leaders, and parents to hear what is needed at individual campuses to answer this question. Round Rock ISD has traditionally had a fiscally conservative budget and that should continue; however, we must not sacrifice the opportunities our schools provide.

**Answer 2:** In a district as fast growing as ours, school population is going to be a consistent challenge. Growth is not going to stop and we are going to need additional schools so we can continue to provide a quality education to all students. In order to make decisions that provide the greatest benefit to our students, we need a consistent dialogue with parents and teachers to find the best solutions for each of our neighborhood schools.

**Answer 3:** Absolutely. The Board is elected by the citizens in our community and we should be expected to be more accessible than just a once a month meeting. I make sure that I attend student activities, campus events, PTA luncheons, Board meetings, and I have spoken to diverse groups across the district. This will continue as a member of the Board. I also maintain a website, Facebook, and other social media accounts so I can engage with community members. Making a commitment to be visible, to be accessible, and to engage with the community is one of the key responsibilities on a Board member.

**Answer 4:** Fortunately, Round Rock ISD is currently providing a fantastic education to our students. However, that does not mean we cannot have continuous improvement. Each child in the District deserves a quality teacher, a quality principal, and a quality school. To ensure that this is happening, we must provide the necessary resources to meet the unique needs of each campus. We must expand our schools of choice to provide different learning opportunities so each student can be successful, and we must effectively engage with our parents and community partners to ensure we are surpassing expectations.

**Tony A. Pitts**

**No response**

**PLACE 1**

**Nikki Gonzales**

**Unopposed**

**PLACE 2**

**Chad Chadwell**

**Unopposed**

WILLIAMSON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

**Question 1:** What are the transportation issues facing your precinct and how do you propose to address them?

**Question 2:** What would you do to improve the quality of life for those living in the most impoverished areas in your district?

**Question 3:** Please explain whether you would favor new campaign finance rules for the County candidates that would include disclosure of contributors and expenses, in searchable online database that is available to the public?

**Question 4:** What issues within your district need the most attention? What solutions will you pursue?

**PRECINCT 1**

**Terry Cook (D)**

**Background:** Business owner, business analyst, people & program manager, contract negotiator, budget planner/administrator, RFP responder, park & open land planner

**Education:** BS Biochemistry, East Carolina University MS Biomedical Engineering, Duke University Master Gardener (Colorado) Woody Plant Management, CSU

**Website:** www.terryforwilco.com

**Answer 1:** I-35 traffic congestion: I will seek funds to improve Hwy 79 & toll road flow onto I-35, and add free-flow U-turns to reduce traffic light snarls. Congestion on older roads: I support lane expansion with shoulders & medians to meet needs of a growing county. Antiquated infrastructures: I will push to update structures such as the Great Oaks Bridge to improve access, flow, & safety. School Traffic Congestion: I will work with schools & communities to develop traffic controls that will make children safer and reduce congestion, starting in the Davis Springs/Pearson Ranch Road areas.

**Answer 2:** I will work to make affordable housing (30%) of household income a county priority. Families without decent housing have poorer health, children who do less well in school, and higher unemployment. I would work with Wilco cities, developers, and the county to explore options for building/developing more affordable housing. I will work closely with Wilco non-profits that provide food, services, & necessary items at low or no cost to low-income residents. Supporting these organizations in outreach and function benefit families, schools and communities.

**Answer 3:** Terry Cook: I see no reason for goods and services, & necessary items at low or no cost to low-income residents. Supporting these organizations in outreach and function benefit families, schools and communities. I support these organizations to enhance their mission. That said, there also needs to be an exit strategy enacted with each community banking.

**Education:** Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Accounting from Austin College 1982

**Website:** LandyWarren.com

**Answer 1:** The citizens of Williamson County want more roads built, and existing roads maintained. As Chairman of the 2013 Williamson County Road and Park Bond Committee, we balanced maximizing construction of roads per the Williamson County Strategic Road Plan with protecting the taxpayers of Williamson County, by funding as many roads as possible and stopping under an amount which would have raised taxes on our taxpayers. I support the current Court’s allocation of funds to purchase additional right of way, and perform engineering, to jump start additional build-out of the strategic plan.

**Answer 2:** Landy Warren: This is an area that I have been fully engaged in for years. We have recruited numerous higher educational providers to the County and they have crafted degree and/or certificate plans requested by specific employers to train workforce for available jobs. We have a strong and robust safety net of community service organizations to assist those in need, and we need to continue to support these organizations to enhance their mission. That said, there also needs to be an exit strategy enacted with each candidate to file financial reports that disclose donor names, addresses, primary occupations, employers, & amounts donated. Lacking this information, donations must be rejected. Wilco reports are filed with Wilco Elections & put online for all to read. Sadly, many Wilco officials, including county commissioner, file incomplete reports. We must clarify filing requirements, systematically review reports for completeness, and enforce financial penalties for noncompliance. I am committed to making this happen.

**Answer 4:** Property appraisals: My neighborhood houses with same builder & floor plan had large discrepancies in square footage for identical homes. Further, appraisal values applied to same models were anything but equal & uniform. All taxing entities rely on appraised values & most Wilco properties are homes. I will demand citizen-review of current procedures & seek reforms. Annual raises for elected officials: The Court has increased salaries 2-3% for themselves & all elected officials annually in recent years. The public sector is not seeing that level of raises; why should our elected officials?

**Landy Warren (R)**

**Background:** 34 years of financial institution experience, being 6 in regulatory and 28 in financial services, & necessary items at low or no cost to low-income residents. Supporting these organizations in outreach and function benefit families, schools and communities. I support these organizations to enhance their mission. That said, there also needs to be an exit strategy enacted with each
enrollment that leads the individual to a dignified independence and self sufficiency. **Answer 3:** I presently file regular campaign finance reports that fully disclose all contributors and expenditures. These are available to the public on the Williamson County website, so I am not sure of why additional rules are necessary. **Answer 4:** Williamson County is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation, yet is widely recognized as being the healthiest, providing high quality educational opportunities, has one of the best/most stable economies, and provides overall great quality of live. These accolades are why we are a destination county, with people moving here from around the region, state, nation and world. What we are, and have been, doing is working. As we grow, and become more diverse, maintaining these quality metrics will become a greater challenge. I look forward helping maintain our excellence.

**PRECINCT 3**

Valerie Covey (R)

**Background:** Covey, a CPA for 30 years, has served as County Commissioner Pct. 3 for almost 10 years. She serves on various County boards & committees.

**Education:** Valerie Covey attended the University of Texas at Austin, where she earned a degree in accounting. She has been a CPA for over thirty years.

**Website:** www.valeriecovey.com

**Answer 1:** In a fast growing county, I have continued to address safety & mobility issues by proactively planning and building infrastructure, reserving right-of-way, & implementing the county’s long-range transportation plan. As Commissioner, we have completed many road projects in Precinct 3 including Williams Dr, Reagan Blvd, SH 195, IH 35 northbound frontage road & the turnarounds at SH 29. I am currently working on the SH 29 Bypass, expansion of CR 110 & CR 111, and bridge enhancements at Ronald Reagan/IH 35 and CR 305/IH 35. We have leveraged tax dollars by working with developers, cities & TxDOT.

**Answer 2:** I will continue to visit with communities & neighborhoods about their issues and search for solutions together. Continue to encourage businesses to move to Williamson County bringing more jobs to the area which will help improve county resident’s quality of life and reduce poverty. It will also help with transportation issues in reducing the trips to and from Austin/Travis County. I will continue to address transportation & safety concerns as well as drainage needs that often plague impoverished areas. I will continue to support education at all levels as it is vital to escaping poverty.

**Answer 3:** I am in support of all candidates and elected officials disclosing contributors and expenses. Contributions and expenses reported through currently required Campaign Finance Reports are available online in Williamson County through the Elections website at www.wilco.org.

**Answer 4:** Continued rapid growth requires planning for infrastructure, including roads, water & communication towers for emergency services. I support implementing our long-range transportation plan and helped secure funding in the 2017 budget to kick start the plan working with cities & TxDOT. Mental health issues continue to increase. I serve on a task force that focuses on keeping non-violent offenders with mental health issues out of the county jail providing more appropriate care & saving taxpayer dollars. In budget years ’16 & ’17, I fought to further reduce voter approved debt saving $10M.

**Anthony R. Rector (D)**

**Background:** Worked for GTE/Verizon for 30 years as a outside plant engineer and for the past 17yrs for Georgetown Police Department.

**Education:** Graduated from Georgetown high school and attended Central Texas College.

**Answer 1:** Some of our county roads are in bad shape and working with the road and bridge department hope to bring them back in shape where emergency vehicles can have easy to the people that live in that part of the community.

**Answer 2:** Work with the community leaders in the area to try to come up with a plan for some type of affordable housing for people living in the area.

**Answer 3:** Yes I would favor campaign-finance rules for candidates to bring some transparency back.

**Answer 4:** Our county employees are well under paid I believe re-prioritizing the existing budget will help to better fund living wages and benefits to all county employees and staff.

**SHERIFF**

Robert Chody (R)

Unopposed

**COUNTY ATTORNEY**

Dee Hobbs (R)

Unopposed

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

Shawn Dick (R)

Unopposed

**TAX ASSESSOR-COLLECTOR**

Larry Gaddes (R)

Unopposed

**JUDGE, COURT AT LAW #2**

Laura Barker (R)

Unopposed

**CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 1**

Vinnie Cherrone (R)

Unopposed

**CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 2**

Rick Coffman (R)

Unopposed

**CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 3**

Kevin Stofle (R)

Unopposed

**CONSTABLE, PRECINCT 4**

Marty Ruble (R)

Unopposed