

League of Women Voters of Beaumont

Jefferson County Voter Guide

For an interactive version of our voter guide, visit

www.vote411.org

For Polling Locations and Sample Ballot, visit

www.jeffersonelections.com

Early Voting
October 22 - November 2, 2018

Election Day
November 6, 2018

LWV[®]



VOTER GUIDE RULES

- Candidate replies are printed without editing or verification.
 - Candidates are listed alphabetically by party.
 - This Voters Guide is organized by office.
 - The names of unopposed candidates are also listed.
 - Questionnaires are sent to all candidates unless they are unopposed.
 - Candidates are asked to avoid references to their opponents
 - Sentences that did not meet this criteria are indicated with the following; (Sentence does not meet criteria)
 - Candidates who do not respond to our questionnaire by the print deadline are listed with the notation, “No response received.” Their information may or may not be in www.vote411.org
 - Ballot order at the polls will vary from county to county
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U.S. Representative, Texas District 14

Please visit www.vote411.org for questions and responses from

Randy Weber (R)

Adrienne Bell (D)

Don E. Conley III (L)

District Judge, 172nd Judicial District

Question 1: *Explain why you would make a fair and impartial judge.*

Question 2: *Describe your particular legal experience for the type of judicial position you seek, including how many jury trials you tried as lead counsel.*

Question 3: *What steps will you take to ensure that cases before your court are heard in a timely manner?*

Mitch Templeton (R)

A1: I have represented both Plaintiff's and Defendant's. I have represented the wealthiest entities and the poorest individuals in Jefferson County. I have a long track record of representing indigent criminal defendants.

A2: I have been exclusively a trial attorney for my entire 27 year career. I have tried approximately 100 cases as lead counsel to a jury verdict. I have handled thousands of litigated disputes.

A3: I will enter a scheduling order in every case and hold all parties to that schedule. Continuances will only be granted by agreement or in the interest of justice.

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Melody Chappell (D)

A1: I have practiced law and represented clients in trial on both sides of the aisle. I have represented individuals, companies and public entities as plaintiffs and defendants. I have also been active in the community for over 26 years, making connections with all people in the community. I understand the need to have judges who are unbiased and who are interested in the process of providing equal justice for all. As a certified mediator, I have practiced the role of an impartial adjudicator.

A2: The 172nd Judicial District Court is a civil court. It is not equipped to handle criminal cases nor is its staff certified peace officers. I began trying civil cases, as lead counsel, in Jefferson County District Courts more than 26 years ago. I have handled over 100 administrative hearings and bench trials. I average 1 to 2 jury trials each year. I am board certified in Labor and Employment law and have had a very active Appeals practice, therefore I am particularly aware of trial error.

A3: As a judge, I would demand that attorneys move cases to trial. I would ensure that cases that are set for trial are ready. I would impose a docket control order and move cases to trial. This will help make sure that jurors' time is not wasted.

County Judge

Question 1: *What are your qualifications for the position of County Judge?*

Question 2: *How can the County Judge work best with city, state, and national officials to prepare for future flooding or natural disasters?*

Question 3: *How can the County Judge coordinate with city, state, and national officials to ensure Jefferson County is receiving appropriate and sufficient emergency funds in a timely manner?*

Jeff Branick (R)

A1: I am an attorney and have served as County Judge for the last 8 years, have handled over 3000 probate, guardianship and mental health cases each of those years, have presided over Commissioner's Court and have been intimately involved in all aspects of economic development and emergency management. I am certified by FEMA in the National Incident Management System. I am Chairman of the Gulf Coast Caucus for the National Association of Counties and numerous other boards.

A2: I have worked with our state and federal legislators, the Governor, FEMA and the US Army Corps of Engineers on many flood control projects costing millions of dollars. I worked with Senator John Cornyn to get \$881 million in funding for our hurricane protection levee and got \$85 million in funding for hurricane storm surge protection. I am currently working with three drainage districts on hazard mitigation grant funding for flood control projects.

A3: Jefferson County has already received almost one billion dollars from FEMA, SBA and NFIP and individual assistance payments for Harvey. We will receive hundreds of millions more as the long term housing recovery program is stood up by the Texas General Land Office in the next month. There will also be hundreds of millions going to our local governments and the county through infrastructure and buyout/acquisition funding.

Nick Lampson (D)

A1: I had the privilege of serving 20 years in county government, 12 years in state government, and 10 years in the U.S. House of Representatives overseeing issues relating to the National Weather Service, Corps of Engineers, transportation, emergency management, and infrastructure. The knowledge I've gained and the connections I've made throughout the country, state, and county uniquely qualify me to be an effective county administrator, which is in essence what a County Judge is.

A2: The County Judge oversees emergency management and disaster recovery efforts. There was an obvious breakdown of communication between inter-governmental entities and a lack of consistent coordination among elected officials. I want to establish the Jefferson County Emergency Taskforce, create a disaster center for first responders, and designate warehouses throughout the county to stockpile equipment and materials to aid in recovery and create a comprehensive evacuation plan for residents.

A3: The County Judge must ensure that the city, state, and national officials are aware of our community needs in advance of a disaster, prioritize early preparation, foster better working relationships among elected officials, and be willing to utilize available county funds to aid in people's recovery until state and federal assistance become available.

County Clerk

Question 1: *What are your qualifications for the position of County Clerk?*

Question 2: *What steps can the office of County Clerk take to ensure the security of every vote cast in Jefferson County?*

Question 3: *Identify the three most important issues directly affecting the people of Jefferson County and how you will address these issues, if elected.*

Bailey Wingate (R)

A1: I am an attorney and have frequently filed documents in the County Clerk's office and researched property titles through the office. In addition, I have practiced in all the courts that the County Clerk's office is associated with and my skills as an attorney have given me an ability to work with people of all backgrounds to resolve issues and provide satisfactory work. I am a former financial advisor which will allow me to employ that knowledge to be fiscally responsible with the budget.

A2: We need to have impartial election workers that are well trained. In addition, we need transparency in our election process so that confidence and integrity can be restored. Also, for security reasons we need to make sure all absentee ballots are counted in a timely manner and that all precincts have reported their votes accurately. We need to explore upgrading technology to ensure proper security. . Finally, we need a County Clerk that will hold themselves accountable for the election process.

A3: First, we need to have fair elections regardless of politics. We achieve this by diligently going beyond the minimum standards in the election code. Second, we need to efficiently manage the budget. My background as an attorney and a financial advisor will help me accomplish that responsibility. We need to improve morale in the County Clerk's office. By creating a good work environment it will improve productivity for the employees and make customer satisfaction higher. Thank you.

Caroyne L. Guidry (D)

A1: I have served as Jefferson County Clerk for 13+ years. Hands-on experience has been the best qualifier for my responsibilities as County Clerk. I have learned not just how to file documents, but the importance of being the official record keeper for the County records. I have implemented projects to ensure the preservation of the historical records as well as the daily records filed. I have improve the customer service experience for all that enter the Clerk's office.

A2: We take the maintenance and security of our voting equipment serious. We have checks and balances that for every person that signs in to vote that a vote is counted. The votes tabulated and the number of voters that signed in should always match. We have training before every election , because it is important that we equip our election workers with the necessary knowledge to assist voters if requested, so no voter is disenfranchised at a polling location. I am on-site for all elections.

A3: Because of the disasters Jefferson County has faced since Hurricane Rita, It is imperative the County Clerk's records are available and accessible to homeowners seeking assistance for damages. am reviewing options for a new voting systems with a paper ballot options which voters have expressed great interest in a paper trail. I am working with the sheriff's office on ways to expedite the release of individuals from jail after their court appearance and their need of transportation from HWY69

County Treasurer

Question 1: *What are your qualifications for the position of County Treasurer?*

Question 2: *As County Treasurer, how would you handle unappropriated funds or funds not immediately needed by the county?*

Question 3: *Identify the three most important issues directly affecting the people of Jefferson County and how you will address these issues, if elected.*

Tim Funchess (R)

*No Response Received by Print Deadline,
Visit vote411.org for later responses*

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Charlie Hallmark (D)

A1: Having been raised in a family that owned and operated a small business for 40 years, this gave me incredible insight into all aspects of running a business from an operational and financial perspective. I was the youngest school board member elected in the history of the Port Arthur Independent School District and the youngest school Board President in the history of the Port Arthur ISD. My private and public experience uniquely qualifies me to serve all of the citizens of Jefferson County.

A2: The Jefferson County Commissioner's Court directs the County Treasurer where to invest unappropriated funds not needed immediately by the county.

A3: The first issue is helping our community after the devastating impact of Tropical Storm Harvey. One of the main issues of concern is locating and returning citizens who were relocated due to the flooding. Not only are they our friends and neighbors, but the loss of population could have a devastating impact on local budgets. Second, we all need to work together to prepare for the fact that we will have another natural disaster. Third, to provide employment opportunities for our young people.

Justice of the Peace, Precinct 1 Place 2

Question 1: *What are your qualifications for the position of Justice of the Peace?*

Question 2: *Identify three important issues directly affecting the people of Precinct 1 and how you will address these issues if elected.*

Annette Reedy (R)

A1: I have served for 20 years in this exact Court. Currently with Judge Nancy Beaulieu for 8 years and before that under Judge Vi McGinnis for 12 years. I am the only candidate in this race who has actual in depth experience in the Justice Court System. I have 200 hours of training through Texas State University in the laws specifically created for JP Court. I am also a state of Texas certified Court Clerk. As head clerk, I have handled every aspect of the office and I am ready to serve as JP.

A2: 1. Technology. In 2019, a law may increase the jurisdictional limit to \$20k. I plan to extend our online services to include e-filing. 2. Truancy. In 2015 truancy moved from criminal to the civil court. As a court we may not create new programs to deal with truancy, but improve on those in place. I know where we can improve while legally staying within the law. 3. Efficiency. With my experience, I am able to print court judgments in the courtroom allowing a clerk to serve the public in the office.

Benjamin "Ben" Collins, Sr. (D)

A1: I am a 37 year Jefferson County law enforcement veteran, with hands-on knowledge and experience in both the criminal and civil aspects of law enforcement. My experience includes working for the Constable's office, serving the citations issued by the J.P. courts. I am active in my community, working with numerous churches and charities. With dedication, integrity, and compassion, I will be a fair and impartial Justice of the Peace who will serve all the citizens of Precinct 1.

A2: The availability of the court is an issue I plan to address by simply flexing the hours of court staff from 8-5 to 9-6, this will give more accessibility to all citizens to handle their affairs. To ensure needed funds are staying in households, I plan to offer more community service in lieu of fines for first-time offenders. Finally, I plan to implement a youth outreach program to combat the bullying, truancy, and gang violence issues plaguing our community.

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Constable, Precinct 1

Question 1: *What are your qualifications for the position of Constable?*

Question 2: *Identify three important issues directly affecting the people of Precinct 1 and how you will address these issues if elected.*

Charlie Wiggins (R)

A1: 32 Years with Jefferson County, 8 years as the elected Pct.1 Constable. I hold my Masters Peace Officers license, graduate of the Constables Leadership College at Sam Houston University, Civil Process Proficiency certificate, Emergency Management certificates, and over 1000 hours of in service civil and criminal courses. I've served 4 years on the Constables Education Committee (JPCA) writing curriculum for Constables and Deputies.

A2: Hurricane Harvey taught us how important community policing can be. Helping people in any way possible will be my goal in future disasters. Also, being a civic leader with Girls Haven, Boy Scouts, civic clubs, and charitable events, is a great way to be a part of the precinct. I will Continue my Constables Scholarship for financial need to attend Lamar University.

Jevonne Pollard (D)

A1: I am currently serving as a Deputy Constable in Jefferson county Pct. 2, under Christopher Bates. Not only am I a Deputy Constable, but I have also been serving as an assistant clerk in the office. I understand the process from receiving the papers for service, entering the papers, and assigning the papers to the deputies. I have also done the end-of month reports, payroll, invoices and assisted with personnel files while under Constable Bates administration.

A2: Civil process is a straightforward business but I understand that the relationship between the citizens that we serve and law enforcement could be better. I also would like to improve the efficiency in the office by improving the paper count. I would also like to start a junior deputy program in Constable's office. I am not sure if I will have the time to implement a full program but I would like to partner with my mentor in Pct. 2 to bring that to Pct. 1.

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Unopposed Candidates

State Representative, District 21

Dade Phelan (R)

State Representative, District 22

Joe Deshotel (D)

Justice, 9th Court of Appeals District, Place 3

Leanne Johnson (R)

Justice, 9th Court of Appeals District, Place 4

Hollis Horton (R)

District Judge, 58th Judicial District

W. Kent Walston (D)

District Judge, 252nd Judicial District

Raquel West (D)

District Judge, 279th Judicial District

Randy Shelton (D)

District Judge, 317th Judicial District

Larry Thorne (D)

Criminal District Judge

John "Johnny" B. Stevens, Jr. (D)

Criminal District Attorney

Bob Wortham (D)

District Clerk

Jamie D. Smith (D)

Judge, County Court-at-Law No. 1

Gerald W. Eddins (D)

Judge, County Court-at-Law No. 2

Terrence L. Holmes (D)

Judge, County Court-at-Law No. 2

Clint M. Woods (R)

County Commissioner, Precinct 2

Brent A. Weaver (R)

County Commissioner, Precinct 4

Everette "Bo" Alfred (D)

Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2

Marc DeRouen (D)

Justice of the Peace, Precinct 4

Ray S. Chesson (R)

Justice of the Peace, Precinct 6

Ransom "Duce" Jones (D)

Justice of the Peace, Precinct 7

Brad Burnett (R)

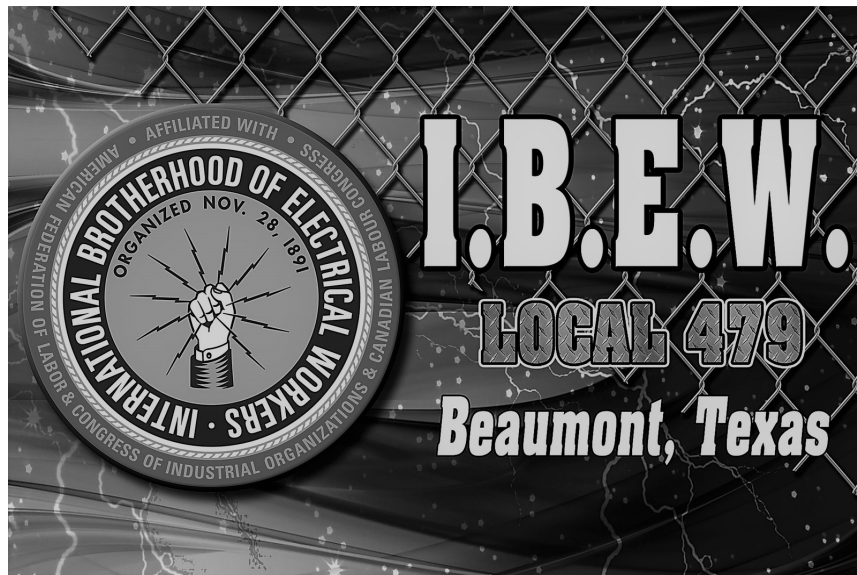
Justice of the Peace, Precinct 8

Tom Gillam III (D)

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Austin, TX 78701

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