

The Bandera PROPHEET

October 11, 2022

City of Bandera Mayor Candidates Q&A

The Bandera Prophet invited the candidates for City of Bandera Mayor to participate in a Q&A. Each candidate's response is published in alphabetical order by their last name.

The questions were as follows:

1. Why are you running for mayor?
2. What would you like to see changed for the city, and how do you plan to implement those changes?
3. What do you believe is working well for the city, and how do you plan to preserve that?
4. What are your biggest concerns for the city?
5. What makes you the best candidate for mayor?

Cindy Coffey:

1. I have watched the council spend countless hours being disrespectful and condescending towards each other and not respecting the difference of opinions or engage in productive dialog to arrive at the best possible outcome for the issues affecting our community. This isn't a game. I have the most experience with the issues currently facing the city including relocating a sewer treatment plant due to being in a flood zone; fighting unwanted solar farms polluting our water resources; developing and building a tourism brand supporting all businesses with expenses shared by the city and businesses both; not paying for needless

consultants; reducing the city codes to 5-8 pages and creating a safe city while preparing for any natural or other disasters. Additionally, making Main Street safer with painted crosswalks at corners and midway with the first two blocks. We need to hold TXDOT accountable and establish a working partnership to keep our community safe.

2. More employee training, a realistic streets and road repair plan as seven years is ridiculous. We need to work better and in sync with the county in all aspects but mostly with safety and emergency response. 2016 demonstrated that the city is ill-prepared for flooding, hurricanes, tornados, or any other life-threatening circumstances. I would also require all city council members to be active with local and regional committees as well as attend TML state training classes.

3. The slogan “Keep Bandera, Bandera.” However, it doesn’t mean establishing ordinances and rules to restrict resident and business property rights. Instead, we need to create an environment that encourages economic development, creativity, resident, and visitor engagement consistent and fair policies. There is no way we can grow beyond our city limits so let’s grow smarter.

Residents choose to embrace the “old west” small town theme. To me the slogan “Keep Bandera, Bandera” means community, neighbors helping neighbors, supporting local business wherever possible, neighborhood watch groups, and more community-based recreation opportunities especially for our kids.

4. There isn’t any public outreach beyond an “issue at hand” and even that is limited at best. Raising taxes, fees, and utilities when property values have increased unrealistically and now declining. Taxes are forcing seniors to choose between living expenses or taxes. You don’t work your whole life to retire on Social Security to pinch pennies. Creating policies like the “Dark Skies” policy is not only a financial burden on residents and businesses, but also a security issue especially with the illegal crisis, neighbors in the county are experiencing a higher-

than-normal theft rate that will be moving into the city especially with so many non-resident guests visiting. We need to keep our community safe at all costs.

5. First, I am a very proud conservative raised in a military conservative family in Leon Valley. Attending John Marshall, SAC, and UTSA. I had a job opportunity and moved to the SF Bay area where I met my husband. After my law program, I began my political career when we bought our first house in Northern California proudly serving 12 years as the first and only conservative elected to my community's office. I also served on the Bandera city council in 2016 as I was nominated by my neighbor Rebeca Gibson.

Since my first city was only seven years old, I was fortunate enough to rebuild the sewer treatment plant not once but twice. Establish affordable housing protocols; a community pool; a one acre fenced skate park with cameras for parents to check on kids that was locked at sundown; a state-of-the-art police/fire station with a FEMA response center; a new city hall; senior center; a new high school with all trades including culinary and the developing of a regional brand promoting tourism with a \$10k initial contribution from all cities which grew to over 200 million prior to leaving.

I know the jobs of every employee in the city whereas most of our council does not. I know Roberts Rules of Order, the protocol used for conducting council meetings and know how to enforce it. We will begin recording our meetings in real time on our YouTube Channel that you will be able to watch from home.

I am also a founding member of a nonprofit organization that will be going live in 2023. A grassroots effort for real property tax reform for Texas to begin our petition and get folks involved to place property tax reform legislation on the 2024 November ballot. Bandera will be the smallest town represented thus far. Let's do this.

If you elect me, I will be here to serve every resident, business, and visitor. I will be available to help you solve your issues that are important to you. As a vested property and business owner I make this

promise to you. Vote Cindy Coffey and let's "keep Bandera, Bandera" a reality.

Rebeca Gibson:

1. Bandera is an amazing little town with a big place in my heart. My years of experience on Bandera City Council have inspired me to want to step up and provide a different type of leadership for the Council and for the community. I want to help the Council to develop and execute their vision for the city over the next two years. I want to engage the community in more dialogue so that their concerns and wishes are better understood by the Council. Much more can be accomplished through collaboration than division. As your Mayor I will handle every issue, great and small, with integrity and transparency. I will direct meetings with decorum and respect and I will faithfully uphold and execute the will of the Council.

2. While City Staff along with the Mayor and Council have been aggressive in seeking government grant funding opportunities, I think we are missing dollars by not looking out for foundation grant funding and partnering with local community based organizations to maximize grant award impact. We need to be on alert for creative funding opportunities and work together to capture those funds for Bandera. I would implement this change by selecting a grant notification platform, making sure the Council and staff have opportunities to learn more about the grant process and how to write competitive grants. We forfeit monies by outsourcing grant writing that could be better utilized in projects for the community. While it is responsible to outsource some very technical grants, this does not need to be the case for all grants. I wrote my first grant for the city last year receiving the maximum award of \$50,000 from Texas Parks and Wildlife for angler access and habitat restoration. The project will launch this fiscal year and I hope that the community will be very pleased with the new, free, public angler park on the 'Tractor Supply' side of City Park. It is through opportunities like this

that I will help guide the Council in creative ways to improve the quality of life for our community.

3. People always talk about protecting Bandera, I'm one of them. During 2021 this community showed up to define that notion. We had a remarkable public turnout for community conversations related to building the new Comprehensive Masterplan "BANDERA 2040: TRUE TO ITS ROOTS." This plan was driven and guided by more community folks than any one effort in a long time. If we are to make this plan a reality and the true reference point it should be then we need to spend the time on communication and education. We need to host discussions with local tradespeople, property owners, business owners and realtors. We need to celebrate what the plan does for the community and work out unforeseen challenges together.

4. Water resiliency is a tremendous concern. Pumping water at a rate so much faster than our aquifers recharge will eventually create a devastating result that will no doubt 'change Bandera'. Conservation is not an ugly word. Being respectful of our natural resources is a way to honor our creator, one another, our children, grandchildren and this land we love so much. Water availability data must be a high factor in future development.

For the last seven years we have strategically prioritized infrastructure improvements beginning with drinking water improvements in storage and pumping capacity. Now we are on to wastewater. While the plant is operational, it is aging and requires excessive maintenance to remain functional, and because of its location in the floodway it must be relocated. This project is of top priority as we navigate ways to fund it and acquire land to build it.

5. Bandera voters have invested their continued confidence in me. The combined experience of winning the last four elections for council and serving six years as Mayor Pro Tem have made me your best and most qualified choice for Mayor. I have been the city's designated liaison to a

long list of local and regional agencies and organizations and the resulting relationships have led to excellent resources and funding opportunities for Bandera. I am a collaborator and a connector who wants everyone at the table talking openly and honestly so that the council faces every challenge and opportunity with reliable, accurate information.

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Early voting for the Nov. 8 election will begin Oct. 24 and continue through Nov. 4, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Extended hours will be Tuesday, Oct. 25 and Nov. 1, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Early voting locations are at the Ray Mauer Annex, 403 12th Street, Bandera; the Lakehills Area Library, 7200 FM 1283, Lakehills; and at the Medina Annex, 161 E. Parker Street, Medina.

Election Day by precinct is Tuesday, Nov. 8, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.