

The Bandera PROPHEET

October 15, 2020

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 City of Bandera Mayor?
2. What is your position on the current noise ordinance, and its enforcement?
3. Do you think Main Street/Downtown Bandera is healthy? If yes, how do you plan to continue its success? If no, how do you plan to improve it?
4. If you were given a \$1 million grant to use for the city any way you choose, what would you do with the money and why?
5. What makes you the best candidate for mayor?

Cindy Coffey:

1. I am running for mayor because the current mayor has reached her limit. I have had the honor of sitting with so many of you and just visiting. I enjoy talking with the community and learning what is important to you and honestly, I share many of those same concerns. Our city has had virtually zero growth. This is due to a lack of leadership. The council can only do so much and without a defined direction they are confused and probably feel they are spinning their wheels. Ironically, when a council member does take initiative to correct an issue they are often met with hostility and lack of cooperation from the mayor and staff. Why is that? Staff is only as effective as the leadership, training and direction given. It is not fair to expect a group of individuals with

limited government experience to essentially try and run the city. It is not good for morale and it surely is not good for the city. There is a lack of cohesiveness and communication between all parties and the responsibility rests squarely on the mayor's shoulders because they are the elected leader.

The lack of interest to learn Robert Rules of Order (the city council meeting procedure) to conduct meetings orderly and fairly is concerning. The mayor's very own campaign slogan is "putting Bandera first". I ask you when has she put Bandera first? Why has she eliminated your right to speak at council meetings, why doesn't she hold town hall meetings to get public input on crucial issues and most importantly why doesn't Bandera have any type of contingency plans for the unknown emergencies? Leadership wants a free pass regarding the Covid 19 crisis but there were so many opportunities that could have been offered if the mayor cared about anybody but the Coop.

Think about it, the mayor chose to open the Coop without support from city legal, no outdoor venue permit and encroached into the city easements. What if somebody hit one of the patrons? Do you think they would only sue the Coop? Absolutely not! They would sue the city as well. The selfishness did not stop there. Where was the plan to help our restaurants, retail establishments and competitor bars? There was not one, instead there were packed houses while other business owners suffered, and people were out of work. Then there are the complaints regarding the live music again without a permit. James, owner of the 11th Street Saloon worked extremely hard with the city for a compromise and plan to maintain his semi-outdoor venue. He posts a notice in the local paper and then applies for a special permit for those wonderful events he so graciously sponsors. Where was the mayor's posts or permit requests? How is this fair?

The current leadership lacks a vision for Bandera beyond their own needs. Deep down we know that we deserve better but more importantly if only the mayor had the desire and drive but sadly, she continues to demonstrate that she does not. I thought for sure somebody would run for mayor and no one did. I filed my papers and I heard that the Mayor

decided to run again because she did not want me to “have it.” Why I ask, are you intimidated by my 13 years of government service? It is time the voters need to recognize the mayor’s limitations. Instead selfishness is preventing the mayor to take care of Bandera. If the mayor can’t recognize the need to take a step back, then the city shall do it for the mayor. It is time for the mayor to allow some new ideas, strategies, and a community driven direction for our city. The voter’s goal should be to retire the mayor by vote with dignity.

2. As I stated above there was not any real problems until the mayor decided to build an outside bandstand and host live music with reckless abandon of the very residents she professes to “put first.” While nothing is perfect the current ordinance is currently sufficient. However why bother with any changes unless there is a community town hall and a roundtable with local bar/tavern owners. There are so many variables to consider in the big picture. It is not a simple issue but having a mayor who is intentionally creating unrest over misrepresentations is grossly negligent. In today’s communities there is rabid civil unrest, and it is very frightening to many members of the city.

So, to have a mayor who is pushing for protests predicated on fabricated nonsense is nothing more than a diversionary tactic to gain votes. Just like the current presidential election. I feel very badly for all the people who have been duped into thinking that there is a desire to remove live music. Please do not be gullible consider the source and their desperation. Then take a moment to think is this right leadership for Bandera.

3. Absolutely not! Businesses are struggling. Since they, unlike the mayor were not allowed to open during the Covid crisis bouncing back has been difficult. Many business owners in town are not city residents and that has been quite frustrating. How can an effective strategy to generate business along with a real plan of action to develop the Cowboy Capital of the World brand not involve the owners, community and elected officials?

We need constructive workshops to build our brand, evaluate the “potential” of our town and determine how we can best market our enormous opportunity to become a full-service tourist destination. We cannot rely on recreation alone especially during a drought. Successful towns have a diversified strategy and not relying on a single income source. I have the experience to build our brand, diversify our opportunities and develop a productive and innovative marketing program that would assist businesses in our current economy.

4. I have learned that if you are given money through a grant the best possible scenario is to leverage that money to qualify for additional grants. Even if the city is not ready to immediately use the money, we can put it into our capital improvement program.

We can also review past suggestions for rezoning open land the city owns into our park program which would generate and qualify us for additional recreational development money.

The most important issue is to have a strong leader who can organize our committees to make defined goals and apply our grants in a timely manner, so we do not lose them. I have learned from many residents who have served on our commissions that they worked extremely hard to get opportunities for our city and it was squandered due to lack of cohesive leadership and direction. This must stop.

5. First allow me to clarify I am not from California. My opponent has reliably used that as a talking point in her campaigning. Instead my father a USAF veteran retired in Leon Valley when I was in the 5th grade. I graduated from John Marshall and spent my nights at Flores Country Store, the Bluebonnet Palace and floating down the river in Bandera. I studied Urban Planning at SAC. Then business law and finance at UTSA. I moved for a job offer to California when I was 26 and met my husband. I completed my law studies in the late 90's. Recently with the help of former council member Lynn Palmer we discovered that I graduated with her husband as well as quite a few of Bandera city and county residents. My yearbook was lost through

moving and my husband never saw my picture. After the reveal he quietly stated you were so “skinny” what happened? I politely told him his desire for home cooked meals. Back in the day we could eat anything and then go dancing all night always managing our figures but sadly he is not a dancer.

We returned to Texas purchasing a home in Bandera in 2015. Since Leon Valley is now a 6-lane highway, Bandera reminded me of my youth growing up in Leon Valley when the city was divided by a two-way road. In 2016 I was appointed to the Bandera city council to ironically finish the mayor’s term who walked out after not agreeing with our then mayor. I have lived all over the world and was exposed to a variety of issues thanks to my father.

I have served on many specialized committees including senior affordable housing, city infrastructure updating water delivery systems, water treatment plant expansion and update, water reclamation, prison reentry with resources, developing a family resource center, senior center, new city hall, 911 center for fire and police and a skills and trade opportunity center for youth in high school to name a few.

Yes, I am a conservative and a consensus builder. I, unlike my opponent am vested with properties I own in Bandera including the corner across from the 11th Street Saloon.

I will conduct myself with the utmost integrity while I am serving as your mayor. I will serve with complete transparency. If you have a question you can call me directly as I maintain an open-door policy. My goal is to restore communication and respect to the city hall and elected offices. So that you may consider running for office or being appointed. I want Bandera to be inclusive no more “clicks” or “mean girl club”.

Everybody is welcome to apply and each will be given equal consideration. No personal attacks on my watch.

This is my pledge to you and I hope you will give me an opportunity to bring back the crowds, put a larger star on the Texas map and build a unique experience that visitors will talk about forever.

If you vote for me Cindy Coffey, you will notice change immediately and begin to feel that community spirit that use to exist long ago.

Suzanne Schauman:

1. I am seeking re-election to the office of Mayor of Bandera to continue strengthening the City's infrastructure, to see the Master Plan completed and to begin to initiate that plan. Since being elected, I have worked on grants for a new well on Dallas Street, new storage tanks at the Mulberry Street Well, the TWDB loan to upgrade the City's drinking water system. The Street Capital Improvement Project is kicking off in the Spring and hopefully we will be moving forward on the relocation of the waste water treatment plant with a \$10,000,000 grant from the State. There's another project in the works to tackle the drainage problem that has plagued our City any time there's much more than an average rain shower. And along with that there are plans to do some riparian landscaping in the park to help deter erosion. All these projects are in the works. I want to continue to move Bandera forward.

2. The Noise Ordinance needs to be amended. There are parts of the ordinance that have not been enforced in years. Those items refer to outdoor venues with music. No one ever thought a pandemic would force already struggling businesses to operate outside. Bandera thrives because of tourism and music is a big attraction and I think a five hour window on Friday and Sunday and a ten hour window on Saturday is too restrictive.

3. I think that Downtown Bandera is a visitor's dream. In a very small area there is shopping, dining, and entertainment. The problems I see are the sidewalks and parking. This is where some creativity and planning must come in. There needs to be some form of transportation from one end of town to the other with off site parking available. Sidewalks need to be reworked through the entire city, not just downtown. There have been proposals in the past to attack the problem but it will take the entire

business sector to make sidewalks a reality so my job will be to listen, learn and compromise.

4. I would create playgrounds throughout the City for our residents and visitors. There is absolutely nothing for kids to do except visit the River. Then with some of it I would open a movie theatre. This would not only give the kids a place to go, and adults like movies too.

5. Since 1995 I have lived within 5 miles of Bandera and I moved into town in 2011. From the time I was first elected to City Council in 2013 I have been working on infrastructure solutions for the City. I didn't know anything about city government, but I did know that something had to be done. In the last four years as Mayor, that has been my focus. There's more to do and I have the experience, staff and network of professionals to get the job done.