

The Bandera PROPHEET

February 3, 2020

Bandera County Candidates Q&A

The Bandera Prophet invited the candidates for Bandera County Commissioner Precinct 1 to participate in a Q&A. Each candidates' response is published in alphabetical order.

The questions were as follows:

1. Why are you running for county commissioner?
2. What responsibilities does a county commissioner have?
3. What issues in your precinct do you think need to be addressed, and how do you plan to address them?
4. If you were given a \$1 million grant to use for the county any way you choose, what would you do with the money and why?
5. What makes you the best candidate?

Bruce Elikor:

1. The main reasons I'm running for county commissioner is that I really love the work I do and the service I can continue to provide the citizens of not only Pct. 1, but the county as a whole. I have always wanted to make a difference in all the jobs I have had and this one is no different. With my knowledge, skills and abilities, I have and will continue to strive and make positive changes in matters that are presented to, confront and/or challenge the court.

2. This question is somewhat misleading because a commissioner has a mandated responsibility to serve as one of five voting members of the commissioners court and to represent their constituents during open court meetings. A commissioner can do little on their own because of their lack of authority given to us by state government thru the Texas

Constitution and multiple government codes. The Texas Constitution specifies that the commissioners courts consist of a county judge and four county commissioners elected by the qualified voters of individual commissioners precincts. The court shall exercise powers over county business as provided by law noted in the Texas Constitution Art. V, Sec. 18.

While not having any county parks or recreational facilities within the boundaries of precinct 1, I do have responsibilities for the operation of the Pipe Creek Compactor Station and the employees that work there. I also have commissioner assigned duties as the courts liaison to the following county departments and one organization:

- A. Liaison to the Road & Bridge Department.
- B. Liaison to the Engineering Department.
- C. Liaison to the Bandera County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

3. My #1 county issue right now is the realignment of the misaligned intersection of Madrona Ranch Road with SH 46. I have been working with the property owners for many years to donate/sell about 1/10 of an acre for this project so the school buses and other larger vehicles using the intersection won't have to cross the center line when turning back towards SH16. Coordination with the three property owners has delayed this project for many years.

After getting a pledge of support from TxDOT to assist with the projects realignment on their rights-of-way (ROW), I ask for and received permission from commissioners court to move forward with procurement of the property from the owners. In previous meetings with the property owners, they all have agreed that it really needs to be done as we work to acquire the property needed. With the help of TxDOT and our Road & Bridge Department, I hope we can acquire and get this project completed in 2020 or early 2021.

My #2 county issue is the betterment of the English Crossing bridge on English Crossing Road at the Medina River. I have been working with TxDOT for many years to fund an off-system bridge replacement and we had a 2019 replacement scheduled when I was in office my first 8

years. We have the 10% matching funds needed for an off-system bridge replacement, but all the statewide floods and hurricanes have diverted much of that funding.

With lots of help from Commissioner Rutherford stepping up and meeting with State Senator Buckingham, I received a call from the TxDOT Area Engineer, Marshall Heap in Kerrville, that said tentatively the English Crossing Bridge is scheduled for a December 2021 letting. That doesn't mean it will happen then, but at least we have a date to work with and it is scheduled for now.

My #3 county issue is the re-habilitation (taking a gravel road and rebuilding the gravel substructure and placing a two course seal of asphalt and grade-4 rock) on several long overdue projects. At \$80,000 for one mile of road / 20 feet wide for the materials alone. At that rate, it doesn't take long to eat up our annual paving budgets.

All we can do is continue to budget the monies we can afford to budget to our Road & Bridge Department each year.

4. I would look for a piece of property to purchase between Pipe Creek and Lakehills to build a satellite EMS station to help supplement our new EMS station south of Bandera. Any left over moneys could then go towards the construction of a new EMS facility.

5. A. I've served as your Precinct 1 County Commissioner for a total of 11+ years from Jan. 1, 2005 to Dec. 31, 2012 and Jan 1, 2017 to present. While I was in office and with your help and support, we broke ground on a much needed Jail and Justice Center capital improvement project. The voters passed the construction bonds the first time it was placed on the ballot. This has resulted in a more efficient operation when handling prisoners. There is no longer a need to house and transport prisoners out of county with a great savings every year. Additionally, we are able to house out of county prisoners that could add new revenue to the county. In 2019 it added up to almost \$170,000. That's a nice plus to assist in paying down the bonds and operating expenses of the jail.

With our Road and Bridge Superintendent John Andrade's leadership we have brought about positive change in the maintenance of our county roads. Even with the weather setbacks we have had in the last few years, Precinct 1 has received 19.0 miles of re-seals and 18 miles of re-hab maintenance since I was first elected. At this time, it cost approximately \$55,000 a mile for re-seals and re-habs are costing approximately \$80,000 a mile for materials only. (Road base, seal coat oil and aggregate)

We saved the existing courthouse from major damage with the restoration of the roof and installed an elevator for handicapped access to the upstairs courtroom. This protects and preserves the historical value of our courthouse that was built in 1891.

We budgeted funds to store and promote the archival of old and new county records which will protect our historical documents and pictures. Some of these documents date back to Spanish Land Grants and are still in our possession.

With our previous EMS Director Cindy Martin's leadership, we improved EMS and response times to reduce the risk of personal injury with well-trained full time & volunteer personnel. The commissioners' court worked hard to provide the most up to date equipment as we could reasonably afford. Our newest EMS Director, Calvin Plummer has continued with providing excellent service to the citizens of Bandera County while struggling with increased service calls! Commissioners Court approved monies to build a new central EMS building south of Bandera on SH16. It should be completed in the next few months and provide much needed additional office space at the old EMS location.

With our previous County Engineer Ray Rendon's leadership, we implemented improved subdivision rules and regulations to provide sustainable growth while protecting our natural resources, primarily ground water and green space. These rules and regulations provide engineered requirements for the road structure and drainage within the rights-of-way. His office, now managed by our newest County Engineer, Dieter Werner, oversees the construction and installation of septic systems and problems with the old septic systems in our county. Mr.

Werner's office monitors development within the counties flood zones and takes care of plat review for re-plats and new developments for minimum lot size and the requirements for sewer.

While I have been in office, our Commissioners' Court has always balanced the budget and maintained more than 30% fund balance at the beginning of each budget cycle. Our county is in excellent financial shape even with our major expenditures that needed to be made.

One of the expenditures was a new Animal Control facility. Another was the purchase of the building and land on the courthouse square at the corner of 12th Street and Hackberry for the Auditor, HR office, JP1, JP4 offices. This purchase helped to alleviate some overcrowding and provided additional land to expand on in the future, as needed.

Using HB1117, passed in the 78th Regular Legislative Session, we completed a County Road Map defining all county maintained roads with beginning and ending limits to assist property owners and Road and Bridge in the proper location of county maintained roads.

After our Road and Bridge facility was washed away by the 2002 flood we relocated to Mansfield Park. With planning and looking at our budget, we were able to build a new Road and Bridge facility in 2010 near the new Jail/Justice Center. We broke ground on Nov. 19, 2007 with announced completion and open house on June 5, 2010. By co-locating both the Road & Bridge and Jail/Justice Center facilities on the same piece of property, we were able to save the taxpayers a substantial amount of money.

We renovated and moved into an existing portable building we owned in Medina for our Constable Pct. 3 and JP3 offices to serve that end of the county. This office also provided us a county owned polling place for voting.

We have made great progress in the reduction of our rental/lease properties. We had only one left, the Pipe Creek Compactor Station. This property is now owned by the county!

Bandera County now owns all of their property with NO MORE lease or rental properties!

We have funded renovations and maintenance of county owned buildings to protect our investments and prolong the life of the structures. We put a new roof on the County Attorney's office building along with energy efficient windows. Added a new roof on the Auditor's Office building with total renovations. Placed a new roof, energy efficient windows, some minor remodeling and new facade on the Ray Mauer Courthouse Annex. We also put a new roof on the Old County Jail on 12th St. in Bandera to help save and protect one of our oldest county buildings.

We put in place a new county wide recycling program in February 2012 at all four of our county collection stations. This enhanced a program we had already started, but it provided better returns on recycled products. With your help in recycling, we reduced the cost to process garbage out of our county to the landfills.

B. I teach (part time) a Work Zone Traffic Control & Qualified Flagger class to Texas city and county employees for the University of Texas - Arlington's LTAP Department. Former instructor of Roadway Maintenance / Preventative Maintenance procedures and Heavy Equipment Operator classes for Texas A&M University System with TEEX.

C. 34+ year career with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Retired with 20 years' experience managing the TxDOT maintenance sections of Bandera and Kendall counties including parts of Comal, Kerr, Bexar and Medina counties. This included planning, budgeting, contract management and personnel matters.

D. 27+ years' service as an active Reserve Deputy in the Bandera County Sheriff's Office. Served as Chief Reserve Deputy for five of the last six Bandera County Sheriffs and held an Advanced Peace Officer & Advanced Jailer Certification's from TCLEOSE. Retired in the summer of 2007.

E. 26+ years of service in the US Air Force; active duty from 1965 to 1969 in an Aircraft Control and Early Warning Ground Radar repair AFSC and reserve duty from 1970 to 1992 in the Airborne Radio and

Radar repair AFSC's including five and a half months active duty during Operation Desert Storm.

Again I'm asking for your vote and support.

Troy Konvicka:

1. I am running for County Commissioner because I want to be part of the community and have an influence in the future of my home town. I want to be active in keeping Bandera county history and heritage as "Cowboy Capital of the World" while bringing the county into the 21st Century and build an infrastructure to support both. I believe to be part of the solution or change you have to be willing to be involved and active in the process. I want to be the voice for my precinct in the county to provide support and stance in topics and issues that impacts us all.

2. A county commissioner represents one of four precinct in the county and has many responsibilities for the county including roads and bridges, operating facilities, bond authority, contracting authority, holding general and special elections, public health and welfare regulations, administrative duties and Public Works. Budgets and decisions on tax rates, approves budgeted purchases of the county, has authorizing authority for contracts, provides and maintains county buildings and facilities, replat of subdivision and ranches, maintaining and designating county roads and bridges are items that commissioners look at and vote on during Commissioners' Court.

3. The tracking and reporting of what is dumped and how its regulated and monitored in the Precinct 1. I would like to update the system to monitor and record what comes in and the money collected to make it more efficient for the county. Road repair and construction is wide spread in the precinct, I would utilize my experience with working with other agencies and build relationship with Road and Bridge to facilitate progress. The lack of availability for residents to be at Commissioners' Court and see why decisions are made and the issues being brought to

the court for the growth and development of Bandera County. Our responsibility is to be the voice for the voters and have their best interest in mind as well as county's interest when making decisions for the future. I would propose bringing Commissioners' Court to them as a podcast or record it so residents can watch and see what we are doing for them.

4. I would look at the greatest need for the community and infrastructure and prioritize them to best benefit the county. I would first look at emergency and first responders to support and outfit them with the best and adequate equipment to provide the best service to the residents. Next would be roads and bridges throughout the county to provide the equipment Road and Bridge needs to effectively and efficiently repair and maintain roads and upgrade bridges and low water crossing to ensure safer commute for residents and emergency responder during any weather condition. Then look at update or building facilities for the community and tourist to influence growth.

5. I am from Bandera and have roots here. I left after high school and have 22 years of military experience with working with large groups and departments to accomplish a mission from small unit to large division in scale. I worked up through the military to be in charge of hundreds of men and multiple units from local training to major oversea deployments. I can work with people and develop and execute plans, boards, and committees to accomplish a wide verity of issues. I have worked in several embassies around the world and as a representative of the United States with foreign counties to help stabilize and establish relationships for future goals.