



## Questions for Candidates for Law Enforcement from the Conservative Coalition of Harris County

Our questionnaire is for candidates to indicate their reasons and opinions concerning issues surrounding their races. This questionnaire will be posted onto the Conservative Coalition of Harris County website for public voter viewing.

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Candidate Name | Position for which the Candidate is Running |
| Mike Knox      | Harris County Sheriff                       |

Please give your answer to each of the following questions and please include your rationale with each answer. Please be concise & clear.

1. Please describe the qualifications and experience that make you the best candidate in your political race. What differentiates you from the other candidates?

**Answer:**

**I have over 15 years of practical police experience - from patrol to investigating complicated homicide cases. I created the first Divisional Gang Unit in Houston in 1988. I am a founding member of the board of the Texas Gang Investigators Association. I served my fellow officers as an elected board member and chairman of the Political Action Committee for the Houston Police Patrolmen's Union.**

**I am a published author and a recognized international expert on street gangs. I have been a business owner for over 20 years operating my own successful consulting firm which, consults with law enforcement agencies in the United States and abroad on the subject of street gangs and violent youth offenders.**

**I have served three terms as a precinct chair, election judge/alternate judge, member of the local government committee for the Harris County Republican Party and delegate to many Senatorial and State Conventions. I have not missed voting in a Republican primary. I am a proven, conservative Republican who is the same conservative in the trenches as I have been as an elected official.**

**I was elected to At-Large Position 1 of the Houston City Council in December of 2015 and served two 4-year terms in that position. I was elected citywide twice in blue Houston and elected as an outspoken conservative. During my first term I gained a reputation as a person who stood up for conservative values and was unafraid of confrontation with the Democrat Mayor and liberal majority of council. During my second (and final term) my reputation was reaffirmed by focusing on good government based on social and fiscal conservative values and I won key conservative victories in my fight.**

**I have the law enforcement experience, the business experience, the political experience, the electoral experience and the personal fortitude to be the winning Republican nominee for Harris County Sheriff.**

2. Please describe two or three main issues facing the Harris County Sheriff Department and your proposed solutions regarding them.

**Answer:**

**Increasing crime related to illegal immigration, narcotics and human trafficking, jail safety and the lack of manpower at the jail are three pressing issues at the moment. Each of these contribute to the overall problem.**

**A large percentage of the illegal narcotics and human smuggling trade is believed to be the result of unprecedented illegal entry of individuals and groups into the United States. We have no idea what the true impact is because the HCSO ceased keeping records many years ago when it ceased to participate in the federal 287G program. I will reinstitute the 287G program for two reasons. I will send a bill to the federal government to recoup the taxpayer cost of incarcerating illegal immigrants in our county and I will use the data to convince Commissioner's Court to fully fund the jail.**

**Additionally, a recent bill passed the legislature creating the opportunity for Sheriff's to deport persons who have illegally entered the United States through Texas. Having HCSO deputies trained to investigate federal immigration status will make it much easier for the Sheriff to document and successfully deport individuals.**

**The deplorable state of the jail is the result of understaffed and overworked jailers. The root cause, in my opinion, is that the courts do not move their dockets rapidly, which therefore causes inmates to remain in jail custody for long periods of time, awaiting their day in court. The Judges are elected public officials and those who are creating the backlog need to be called out publicly. Law enforcement and jailers are working massive amounts of overtime to deal with court created backlogs. The courts need to be working overtime, evenings and weekends, as well, to reduce these backlogs and relieve the stress in the jail.**

**Understaffing is a chronic condition of law enforcement in our current environment. Increased numbers and competitive pay incentives for jailers and deputies will be required.**

**We must have an adequately funded jail with enough personnel to maintain safety. We must have enough deputies to enforce the law in the 980 square miles of unincorporated Harris County -- roughly 1/3 greater land mass than the city of Houston and a population set to far exceed the population of incorporated areas of the county very soon.**

**The Sheriff must be willing to aggressively advocate for the people of Harris County to help the Commissioner's Court understand their constitutional duty to protect the citizens of Harris County – even at the expense of their own pet projects. I have experience standing up for what is right and I am prepared to do whatever is required to convince the Commissioner's Court safety is their number one priority.**

3. Please describe any changes to the department's day-to-day operation that your office might make to improve efficiencies.

**Answer:**

**The HCSO is in such disarray it will be necessary to take office to review and audit each program and division to determine what needs to stay and what needs to go. Suffice it to say there will be constant reviews of practices, procedures and policies designed to improve efficiencies throughout my administration.**

4. Please describe your ideas toward boosting department morale and increasing confidence in your office with the general public.

**Answer:**

**Moral is a function of leadership. The Sheriff sets the standard. Under my administration every employee will know they are a vital, important, and valued member of the HCSO and the criminal justice system.**

**Training is a priority. A good first step is increasing the minimum standards of education and training above the state minimum requirements. Well-trained employees are confident and can be relied upon to make good decisions. Good decisions reinforced increases professional behavior and demeanor leading to improved competencies and higher morale. Once moral is improved the employees will become proud to work for a Sheriff who values them and is interested in their professional development.**

**The citizens of Harris County will benefit in the apparent professionalism of all the HCSO employees and feel confident they will be treated fairly, with courtesy and with respect. Consequently, confidence in the Sheriff's office will rise among the citizens of Harris County.**

5. Harris County has seen a large influx in population over the last couple of years. What steps have been done or are needed to handle the increasing county population?

**Answer:**

**The influx of movement into the county requires a larger Sheriff's Department. There is a commonly held belief approximately 10% of any population will commit a crime if the opportunity presents itself and they think they will not get caught. About 1% of any given population sees crime as a career path. This means that one in a hundred persons moving into Harris County is likely a career criminal. So for every 500,000 new residents the Sheriff's Department will deal with approximately 50,000 opportunity criminals and an additional 5,000 career criminals. We need more officers on the streets.**

6. Is Harris County prepared for a large emergency event, such as a major hurricane? If not, what additional steps would you like to see taken by county officials to better prepare residents for such an event?

**Answer:**

**I believe we are generally prepared. While serving as a City Councilmember in Houston, I worked closely with Harris County during Hurricane Harvey, several major floods and a couple of significant freezes. With each one additional corrections and adjustments were made to prepare for the next emergency. As each new emergency occurs unforeseen circumstances present themselves which identify strengths and weaknesses.**

BY RETURNING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE, THE CANDIDATE ASSUMES FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. THE ANSWERS ON THE FOREGOING REFLECT THE CANDIDATE'S BEST EFFORTS TO ANSWER THIS QUESTIONNAIRE HONESTLY AND DIRECTLY.

PLEASE SAVE YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO YOUR LOCAL MACHINE IN THE EVENT THAT THERE ARE ANY TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WHEN YOU ATTEMPT TO EMAIL IT BACK.

Once this questionnaire has been completed, please email it to:

[alex@cchc-pac.org](mailto:alex@cchc-pac.org)

\* **Please note:** You **must** return your questionnaire from the email address to which it was sent. Questionnaires returned from any other email address will be considered fraudulent and will **not** be recorded and no answers will be published in the voter's guide. CCHC-PAC deems a return from the proper email address as authentication of the correct respondent.