



Questions for Candidates for County Judge 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.

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| Candidate Name | Position for which Candidate is Running |
| Martina Lemond Dixon | Harris County Judge |

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

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| 1. | <p>Please describe the qualifications and experience that makes you the best candidate in your political race.</p> <p>Answer: Currently, I am the President of the Humble ISD School Board, Board Secretary on the Harris County Appraisal District (HCAD) Board of Directors, and on the Lone Star Investment Pool Board. I have, also, served on the Kingwood Super Neighborhood Council, Lake Houston Family YMCA Board, the Humble ISD Education Foundation Executive Board, and on the Humble ISD PTA Council’s Executive Board. I was the Leadership Lake Houston 2014 Class President, which is a program sponsored by Partnership Lake Houston. In 2008, I was elected to the School Board at the American Community School in Abu Dhabi, which is affiliated with the U.S. State Department.</p> <p>As School Board President of the Humble ISD we manage a district budget of more than \$500 million. While the student population continues to increase, we have cut property taxes every year since 2018, a total M&O tax rate reduction of 15.48%. Also, in this role, I have been on the front lines of managing the pandemic from a leadership perspective. In Humble, we chose to open schools after summer break to do what is best for students. In fact, while other districts were literally losing students, Humble ISD’s student population continued to grow. Again, when others were canceling graduations, we persevered. Not because we are so-called “science deniers,” but because we knew that we could mitigate the risk and keep people safe. When we were told we had to mandate masks, we did not, we gave our parents and teachers the option to do what is best for their families. This is what effective leadership looks like.</p> <p>My degrees are in Communication, Construction Management, and Education from Auburn University and LSU. I have extensive leadership experience in emergency management, finance and budgets, investments, overseeing bond fund expenditures, bond sales, construction and capital improvements, flood mitigation, project management, program evaluation, procurement, long-range facilities planning, policy and procedures, and community involvement.</p> |
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| 2. | Please explain what you believe are the most significant issues in this race, why you are running for this position and what differentiates you from the other candidate(s). |
| | <p>Answer: I am inspired to run for County Judge for the people of Harris County, where I was born, raised, and have lived my entire life. This race is about people who are afraid to let their kids ride their bikes in their neighborhoods because crime is out of control, it is about people who are victims of crimes committed by violent offenders being released on low or no bail, which my extended family has fallen victim to, it is about equipping our Sheriff's Deputies and Constables with the tools to keep our communities safe, it is about flood prevention, better roads and highways, and making common sense decisions for what is best for the entire County...it is about the future of Harris County.</p> <p>I am the ONLY candidate in the Republican primary with a proven conservative record in an elected office, I am the ONLY candidate who has been elected to office multiple times with excellent margins, and I am the ONLY candidate who can beat Lina Hidalgo in the General Election. I will use my vast leadership experience to focus on the most important issues in this race, which include the out-of-control violent crime and flood control, and I will stand up against any increase in taxes.</p> |

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| 3. | What will be your top 2 or 3 priorities during this upcoming term? |
| | <p>Answer: Crime. As County Judge, I will take the fight to the criminals, and we will run extended court hours every day if we must, to clear the current backlog and get the criminals off our streets.</p> <p>Taxes. We will stop the wasteful spending and begin cutting a county government that has grown beyond what is necessary or needed to ensure we have good roads and highways, and make common sense decisions for the good of the entire County. And we will immediately stop the misuse of funds approved by voters for flood control. I have been tested and I am ready for the challenge of leading Harris County.</p> <p>Flooding. I would begin by stopping the use of the voter approved flood bond as a political football. I would go back to the table with our state and federal partners to maximize Harris County taxpayer dollars and spend the flood money by prioritizing the worst first, not based on politics. Also, I will visit each of the watersheds and channels, and have town hall meetings in each area to hear the concerns of the residents. Also, partnering with Texas Water Development Board, Harris County Flood Control District, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, flood control organizations, experts in flood control, engineering firms, meteorologists, and groups like Houston Stronger to get a high-level perspective on the overall best plan to reduce flooding. There are many reports, studies, and investigations already completed that have been essentially ignored, which endangers the people of Harris County.</p> |

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| 4. | <p>What are the primary functions that can be improved within the Commissioners Court? What sort of things can be done to improve relations, communication and services with the public?</p> |
| | <p>Answer: Prior to Lina Hidalgo taking office Harris County Government was a model government. The best government is that closest to the people, and the best way to overcome the challenges of managing a county the size of Harris with half the 4 million population in unincorporated areas is to return power to the commissioners, to do this we must untangle the web of bureaucracy created by Lina Hidalgo and get back to focusing on the few things' county government should do and do it well. Fighting crime and keeping violent criminals in jail, moving forward with our infrastructure needs, and keeping our lives and property safe from natural disasters.</p> <p>We must shut down the Elections Administrator office and return our elections to the County Clerk's office. Currently, once we vote and get the printout of the paper ballot, it goes into the scanning machine, scans and records, and the ballot drops into a container. One example, according to an alternate judge supporting my campaign, at the closing of the day, the Election Judge breaks the seal, reseals it, and records the number on the container. The Election Judge ALONE drives the container to the NRG drop-off. One of the major issues is during Early Voting, the Election Judges are all Democrat and the "powerless" Alternate Election Judges are Republican, therefore each polling location is controlled by Democrats during the early voting period. The only time the Alternate Judge has any power at the polling location is if the Election Judge is incapacitated or does not show up, essentially making the Alternate Judge nothing more than a clerk. We need ballot security, so with our current machines, it would make sense for the ballots to be secured and escorted by the Democrat Election Judge and the Republican Alternate Judge to the NRG drop-off. There is no chain of custody, so at the very minimum we need to have members of both parties escort ballots to its final destination, and we must give more power to the Alternate Judges.</p> |

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| 5. | <p>With ever increasing advances in computer technology, is the Harris County Central Technology Services office well prepared for increasing population trends in Harris County? If not, what are your strategies to improve the office for the future?</p> |
| | <p>Answer: It is now called Universal Services (US). This department is the shield against cyber-attacks against the county and taxpayers alike and Democrats on Commissioners Court have gutted the department. A full assessment on strengths and weaknesses needs to be done Day One, including a hard look at leadership there.</p> |

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| 6. | After several years of rising property values and increasing general revenues, are there certain categories within the General Fund where making budget cuts make sense (by better efficiencies)? If so, what will be your strategy to lower taxes and/or tax rates in Harris County? |
| | <p>Answer: Harris County is racing towards a property tax bomb with the billions of federal funds boosting the current county budget. A couple of months ago, I met with Texas Public Policy Foundation’s Chief Economist, Vance Ginn, PhD, to discuss and review the entire plan for Lower Taxes, Better Texas: Eliminating Property Taxes by 2033. The state has already began making it easier for school districts to reduce the tax rate, with M&O reductions, while providing additional state funding for public schools. As we continue moving in the direction of property tax reductions, the savings to the taxpayer, countywide, will contribute to a more robust economy.</p> <p>Lina Hidalgo has led the charge to create a large central bureaucracy to push through her progressive agenda. As County Judge I will begin to dismantle the top down approach and immediately move resources to get the criminals off our streets by making safety the top priority. This begins by dismantling the wasteful new departments like the Elections Administrator’s Office, the County Administrator and the Economic Equity and Opportunity Department. Also, there will be a move to consolidate services and do collective bargaining across departments where the collaboration provides a cost benefit to the County.</p> |

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| 7. | Are the Law Enforcement agencies adequately staffed and funded to handle the increasing population growth within your Precinct in Harris County? |
| | <p>Answer: No, absolutely not! Under Hidalgo, the county jail has become nothing short of a disaster. Intentionally underfunded, we have put hard working guards’ lives at risk. This is an untenable situation and needs to be dealt with immediately. We need to properly staff our jails, review the pay for law enforcement to be sure we are being competitive with other agencies in our area, and focus on strategic workforce planning. We need to get rid of unnecessary departments and wasteful spending in order to refund dollars taken from the budgets of law enforcement.</p> <p>Also, to build morale and show our law enforcement officials we support them, we need to get rid of the backlog of criminal cases and stop this “catch and release” approach to violent offenders. The current backlog of criminal cases was inherited by Lina Hidalgo. She made it worse by refusing to fund more prosecutors, therefore denying the accused their right to a speedy and fair trial. We need to surge the number of prosecutors and expand court hours to clear the backlog, so we can get the most violent criminals off our streets. We need to revisit bail reform with lawmakers, because a one-size-fits-all approach is not what is best for the people of Harris County.</p> |

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| 8. | Harris County Commissioner’s Court handles an enormous budget every year. What skills and experience do you have that makes you the best person to elect for the County Commissioner of your Precinct? |
| | <p>Answer: I serve as the President of the Humble ISD School Board where we manage a district budget of more than \$500 million, continually maintaining a Superior A with the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST). While the student population continues to increase, we have cut the M&O property tax rate by 15.48% since 2018, as highlighted by Governor Abbott at The Kingwood Tea Party, recently.</p> <p>The final installment of our 2018 bond of \$575 million, was sold in November 2021. The total all-in interest cost for the entire bond is 2.746%. We did this while keeping the INS rating steady and without increasing the tax rate. We were able to complete every project we promised the voter, and were able to add additional projects, because we took advantage of the Covid opportunities in construction savings, and we are extremely proud of our AAA rating.</p> |
| 9. | Should any changes be made to Harris County Departments (Infrastructure, Services, Law Enforcement, Justice, etc.) to improve productivity, reduce waste and increase efficiency? Are there departments that can be combined or eliminated? |
| | <p>Answer: Harris County Departments should focus on their intended goal and not Lina Hidalgo’s progressive wish list. For example, departments must now spend time and resources aligning department needs with the progressive goals of the commissioner's court. For example, departments are now forced to spend their time focused on equity and disparities, and not their intended purpose. As County Judge I will have a government open to all people, I will lead with integrity and transparency, and department heads will be accountable for doing the job in which they were intended.</p> |
| 10. | What sort of future programs or services will you create or offer within your Precinct in the upcoming term? |
| | Answer: N/A |
| 11. | Harris County property values have substantially jumped in value over the last five years. What recommendations do you have that will rollback county taxes for the average citizen in your Precinct? |
| | <p>Answer: Currently Harris County has been flooded with federal dollars from the pandemic and the trillion-dollar Biden bailout. Instead of creating more government, Harris County should be using those tax dollars to find ways to lower property taxes for everyone.</p> |
| 12. | Are there any areas where the State and County need to improve communication to enhance tax revenue distribution, reduce waste, or the duplication of efforts? Are there tax functions that are currently done at the State level that would be more efficient at the County level? |
| | <p>Answer: Yes. Harris County has the greatest medical facilities in the world. Therefore, Harris County taxpayers are forced to pay for low income healthcare for those that do not live in Harris County, but come here to seek treatment. As the largest county in the state, it is imperative the County Judge work with the Governor to find efficiencies for all taxpayers.</p> |

1 Does the County emergency services have adequate resources to handle an emergency
3 such as hurricane, grid failure, deadly pandemic, or epic flooding? What sort of strategy
would you envision as County Judge to get Harris County through such an event?

Answer: No, when Lina Hidalgo became County Judge there were enough reserves to handle two natural disasters simultaneously. That money has been wasted on growing the government, leaving Harris County residents at risk. As County Judge I will immediately begin to restore those funds by cutting government departments and overreach to protect Harris County residents.

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

* **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.