

City Council Candidates Questionnaire – 2021

Brenham (Washington County), Texas

- 1. Why have you decided to run for election at this time? Briefly outline the top 2-3 issues you feel will be of significant importance in the next four years?**

I feel a calling to be part of the next generation stepping up and getting involved in Brenham & Washington County's local government to further serve my community. I've lived here most of my life, and I want future generations to want to continue to raise families and build businesses in Brenham.

Significantly important issues in the next four years include rebuilding the relationship between city council/manager and the citizens of Brenham, more affordable housing for lower to middle income buyers, and building a better relationship between the city and small business owners.

- 2. What key competencies do you feel you possess to be an elected official?**

Representation
Communication
Negotiation

- 3. Briefly describe your background in areas such as financial management, ability to be an effective leader and communicator, understanding of labor and human resource issues, understanding of local economic issues, ability to contribute to strategic planning and initiatives?**

As a small business owner, I manage finances daily as well as plan long term budgets. My communication skills include actively listening and seeking all pertinent information before making decisions or responding. As Residential Coordinator at Brenham's largest employer (BSSLC), I was responsible for scheduling all direct support professionals, prescreening, interviewing, hiring and all issues that came with that position. Along with other community members, I have initiated and planned several community wide events such as the Brenham Better Together Community Picnic, providing meals to BISD students during COVID lockdown, and Brenham Thanksgiving Blessing.

- 4. What do you consider to be the top issue affecting local economic growth?**

Brenham has to work towards attracting employers who can pay hard working and skilled laborers a good wage. Too many people are forced to commute to earn a living. People are either commuting to Brenham because they can't afford to live here, or they or are commuting out of Brenham because job opportunities are limited here.

- 5. What could you do as an elected official to help small businesses in the community?**

I want to ensure that entrepreneurs who would like to start, expand, or move their businesses to Brenham are supported and not burdened by the city by addressing zoning and building regulations and making exceptions quickly and efficiently when necessary. With help from the knowledgeable members of our community, in addition to the various boards and committees, we can ensure that when a business owner wants to move forward with their business plan, the city is there to help no matter how big or small the business may be. A successful business environment is essential to a successful community.

6. How important do you feel the relationship is between the City of Brenham and Washington County government? How could it be improved?

It's extremely important. We're better together. I would say that part of the problem is that we have people on both sides that are still holding on to previous differences. I think one of the best ways to improve the relationship is to continue to look for ways to work together on certain objectives and working to leverage each organization's resources for the greater good.

7. What project or issue would be of primary importance to you to work on if you are elected?

The primary issue is rebuilding the relationship between the citizens and the city government and manager. I feel once that is repaired, additional projects will be attainable and issues will be resolved efficiently.

8. What would you do to help ensure that the local economy continues to grow and evolve?

I will listen to all Brenham citizens while also heeding advice from knowledgeable business leaders to make informed decisions on economic growth.

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

I want to thank my family, friends, and supporters for their encouragement and belief that I will be a voice for ALL Brenhamites.

Thank you!

Leah Cook