

VERA LARA-HOOGGE

Candidate for Brazos County Justice of the Peace Precinct 2
2014 Election Cycle

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

1. Please tell us about yourself, why you are running for Justice of the Peace; and, what background, education and experience you have had to prepare you to execute the duties of Justice of the Peace.

I have served as Justice of the Peace, Precinct 2, Place 1, for the past 8 years. When elected in 2006, I promised to serve the voters of precinct 2, on a **FULL-TIME** basis M-F from 8-5P. As you know, a Justice of the Peace has to also be available **24/7**, for emergency calls out, inquest, officers needing warrant at all hours of the day or night. Usually, I am the first one in the office in the morning and the last one to leave at night. I am proud and appreciative of the work that me and my staff have performed for the last eight years. I love my job and I love the people I work for and I love the people I work with. I am passionate and committed to my job. My eight years as Justice of the Peace and my **work ethic can't be beaten**. The Justice of the Peace Courts are known as the "**People's Court**" and I ask for your help and support in allowing me to serve you four more years.

BACKGROUND

I am a lifelong resident of Brazos County. I have (28) years dedicated to public service. Prior to this office, I served as the Administrative Assistant to the 85th District Court. I also served as the Program Director of the County Attorney's Office-Family Violence Unit working with and assisting victims of Family Violence. I have worked for the Bryan Police Department. I have served as a volunteer worker for "Rape Crisis Center and Phoebe's Home."

EDUCATION

I hold a Bachelor of Arts from Texas A&M University and a minor in Spanish. I also hold an Associates in Arts from Blinn Community College and graduated from Bryan High School.

2. Have you read and are you familiar with the Texas Republican Party Platform? Reference pages 4-5 of the RPT Platform (Reforming the Judicial system), do you agree or disagree? Explain differences you hold.

Yes, I am familiar with the Texas Republican Party platform and I do agree with it. I believe in our right to select our judges by direct vote. I support the legislation prohibiting judges defeated by the electorate from serving as visiting judges. I agree that jury service should be limited to registered voters. I am a firm believer that judges should interpret and apply the law rather than make the law.

3. How do you plan to handle truancy cases in the J.P. position?

Once a complaint is filed against a parent for the offense of parent contributing to non-attendance of school by the child under the Education Code, I will set the case for a hearing as soon as possible.

I will have all parties before the court and hear testimony and make the appropriate ruling based on the law. I will always try to work with the schools, counselors, teachers and parents to achieve the goal of either keeping the students in school or finding an alternative program to meet the needs of the student in obtaining an education.

These are just a few of the remedies that the court can impose for violations under the Education Code as follows:

- impose a fine not to exceed \$500;
- attend a preparatory class for high school equivalency exam if court determines the individual is too old to do well in a formal classroom environment;
- take a high school equivalency exam, if the individual is at least 16 years old;
- attend a special program the court determines to be in the best interest of the individual including, alcohol, drug abuse, self-esteem and work or job training programs;
- training for parents including parental responsibility, anger management and family counseling;
- the court can order an individual to complete reasonable community service;
- tutorial program for student to attend academic subjects provided by the school.

4. What criteria will you use in determining appropriate bond?

I use the following criteria when setting bonds:

- nature of the offense;
- prior criminal history;
- flight risk;
- request for higher bond by law enforcement or prosecutors;

- protecting the victims of a crime;
- and ensuring the safety of the community.

5. How do your personal principles and family values align with most of the Republican principles outlined in the Republican Party of Texas Platform?

I am a conservative with Christian values. I believe in the traditional marriage between a man and a woman. I believe the sanctity of marriage. I have been married for 30 years to Will Hooze, a retired Bryan Police Officer. My husband is a lifelong member of the **NRA**. I believe in limited government. I am against abortion. I come from a long line of hardworking and strong work ethic. I believe in welfare reform. I am a firm believer of the right to be safe at home, streets and the **UNALIENABLE** right to defend me and my family.