



**Williamson County Election — August 5, 2010
Candidate Questionnaire**

Candidate Name: Juanita Patton

Office/District: Williamson County Commission – District 11

- 1. What is your motivation in seeking election to the Williamson County Commission? How does your background and/or experience qualify you to hold this position?**

As a lifelong resident of Franklin and Williamson County, I have seen many changes in our community. Through all the changes our quality of life has remained excellent, and as a County Commissioner for the 11th District, I will work diligently to protect and maintain our quality of life.

A majority of decisions that are made by the County Commission are financial and economic in nature. I will use my conservative fiscal management and 28 years of banking experience in Middle Tennessee to 1) keep our property taxes low; 2) keep Williamson County's AAA bond rating; 3) continue improving our excellent public education system; 4) recruit prominent businesses to relocate in Williamson County through the Williamson County Office of Economic Development; 5) enhance and improve our recreational Opportunities; and 6) Protect and maintain our quality of life.

- 2. What should be the top priorities of the Williamson County Commission over the next several years? How would you address and/or fund these priorities?**

1. Keeping our property taxes low - Maintaining a low property tax rate is one incentive that is used by the Williamson County Office of Economic Development to recruit corporate and divisional headquarters to Williamson County.

2. Enhance and improve our recreational Opportunities – Maintaining a healthy life style is an important part of a vibrant and growing community. Williamson County offers many recreational amenities to its citizens. Through my work with the Franklin/Williamson County Boys and Girls Club, I have witnessed the importance of Williamson County's recreational facilities and programs. Parks and Recreation Director, Doug Hood, and his staff provide excellent resources for our children and adults to maintain a healthy life style, through the two indoor soccer facilities, the soccer complex on Downs Blvd, the various recreational facilities within the county, including the indoor aquatic facility in Brentwood (which recently was the site of the county swim meet).

3. Recruit more businesses to relocate in Williamson County through the Williamson County Office of Economic Development - In order to bring more jobs to Williamson County, we need to make sure our Office of Economic Development has the tools it needs in order to recruit more businesses to our county. County Mayor Rogers Anderson and Matt Largen, Director of the Office of Economic Development, have done a great job during the past few years of recruiting prominent businesses that continue to bring in tax revenue and well paying jobs which helps minimize the economic burden on the County and its citizens.

3. What is your vision of residential and commercial development within the unincorporated portions of the County over the next 5-10 years?

I would like to see more well-paying, clean, commercial developments locating in the unincorporated portions of the County, but until the unincorporated areas of the County have sewer systems to service the area, it will be difficult to have large commercial developments in the unincorporated areas.

Over the next 5-10 years, I believe the residential development market will improve. Many developments were started a few years ago only to cease due to the economic conditions throughout the country. Before any new developments begin, I would like to see the unfinished developments completed. Within the next few years I believe the economic conditions will allow the unfinished project to be completed, and I envision the residential developments in the unincorporated areas of Williamson County continuing.

4. Williamson County has realized tremendous success in terms of economic development and corporate recruitment efforts over the past several years. How would you propose to continue and/or enhance these efforts?

County Mayor Rogers Anderson and Matt Largen, Director of the Office of Economic Development have done a great job during the past few years of recruiting prominent and well sought after businesses that bring well paying jobs to Williamson County. I believe the Office of Economic Development should have the tools it needs in order to compete with other counties and cities across the United States. I am an advocate of using bond financing and payment in lieu of taxes programs as incentives to recruit more corporate and divisional headquarters. Also, the Cool Springs Life Science Center is an area that we should exploit more and bring additional bioscience businesses like BioMimetic into Williamson County.

5. Do county governments within Tennessee need broader taxing authority granted from the state legislature? Does Williamson County? If so, what specific revenue-generating options would you support?

Fortunately, a county's taxing power is set by the Tennessee Constitution and statute. In order to be a competitive state and county in terms of relocating businesses or providing an incentive to move to our community, our taxing authority is exactly what we need. Through the fiscally conservative actions of our current county commission and County Mayor Rogers Anderson, Williamson County has not had a tax rate increase in approximately eight years. I will continue the conservative fiscal policies and make sure our County government lives within its means.

6. Under what circumstances should local governments exercise the power of eminent domain? Is there a need to limit or expand this power on the federal or state level?

The county should only exercise the power of eminent domain as a last resort and when the public good requires it. It should be utilized when public safety is an issue. I do not believe it should be utilized for purely private benefit. The Tennessee legislature and the courts have struck a balance between the county's interest and the private land owner's protection. I do not see the need to limit or expand the powers.

7. How important is the development and preservation of diverse housing options within Williamson County? What role, if any, should county government play in this effort?

It is very important for the continued economic growth of Williamson County to have diverse housing choices. Providing incentives to developers to provide affordable housing within their projects for decreased density requirements would assist in providing additional affordable housing.

8. Do you have issues or concerns regarding the County's current sign ordinance? Please explain.

The County's sign ordinance must strike a balance between safety and aesthetics and the need for commercial or informational signs such as realtor signs. Whether the sign ordinance needs to be broadened would be an issue that may need to be studied since it would involve amending the current Williamson County Zoning Ordinance.

9. How should elected officials in Williamson County balance the need between economic development and the protection of our natural resources and the environment?

Part of our excellent quality of life over the years has been our County's ability to maintain the balance between preserving and protecting our natural resources and promoting commercial development. Most recently, the announcement of the location of the Jackson National Life Insurance divisional headquarter serves as an example of the balance between economic development and the protection of our natural resources and the environment.

The Harpeth River is a natural resource that has been neglected and even damaged over the years. I would like to see companies that receive bond financing and payment in lieu of taxes arrangements give back to the communities in ways that will benefit our natural resource, such as helping clean the river and parks or building walking trails.

10. Should Williamson County government advocate or promote initiatives aimed at improving environmental sustainability? If so, where should these efforts focus?

Environmental sustainability is a complex issue requiring the input of many stakeholders. It is important to consider all the potential consequences of such initiatives to avoid unintended or detrimental results.

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