

2009 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Susan	S	Hutchison

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

King County Executive

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

28 years

5. How long have you resided in King County?

28 years

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Friends of Susan Hutchison
PO Box 453400

Address: Seattle WA 98145

City/State/Zip: 206 337-0014

Campaign Phone: _____

Campaign Fax: _____

Campaign E-mail: contact@susanhutchison.com

Campaign Website: www.susanhutchison.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
King County Independent Task Force on Elections	Appointive	2005	One of 10 board members
Governor's A+ Commission Subcommittee	Appointive	Mid 90's	member

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
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SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
 - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
 - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
 - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

When Ron Sims appointed me along with nine other community leaders to the King County Elections Task Force in 2005 to examine the issues surrounding the 2004 disputed gubernatorial race and make recommendations to restore public trust in King County elections, we discovered serious leadership flaws within the executive branch. While I have been encouraged by both Democrats and Republicans to run for a number of public offices in the state, the Executive of King County was one where a non-partisan, non-politician could make a significant impact by leading the county in a new direction.

I bring experience in the public, private, for-profit and not-for-profit sectors: more than twenty years as a TV News Journalist/Anchor (and member of management's executive committee) where nightly I reported the news and issues important to the citizens of our region; 6 years as founder and Executive Director of the \$100 million Charles Simonyi Fund, a foundation which provides grants to arts, science and education programs in the region; leadership on the boards of Salvation Army, Childrens Hospital, Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Symphony, World Concern; and spokesperson, honorary chair, advocate and/or emcee for more than 40 non-profit organizations, from Asian Cultural Center to Zion Prep, which in their diverse ways contribute mightily to the social fiber and well-being of the community.

I solve problems and fix things, and King County needs fixing. There is a quiet uproar among our citizens that our government overspends to satisfy special interests and now wants to raise taxes to compensate for careless fiscal management. Our citizens are tired of a government that is difficult to work with and impossible to navigate. Most of all, they are tired of nothing getting done, especially with regard to transportation solutions that will ease our traffic congestion. I respect the service of my opponents and others who have given years to public service, but because I am not a career politician I can bring new ideas to this office. A lifetime of experiences on both sides of the bargaining table and on both sides of an interview, has helped me always see each side of an issue, and will help me bring people from diverse interests to work together to solve our problems.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

Leadership—is best summed up as Judgment and Courage. Judgment is gained by implementing experience and knowledge of my own and others to make right decisions; Courage, the ability to act on those decisions without wavering under criticism.

Management—at the executive level is my ability to conduct business by bringing together people, delegating responsibility, demanding accountability, and evaluating outcomes and performance. I like to build teams of smart, skilled individuals, and I can work with all types of people by focusing their efforts so their best assets are utilized for the good of the whole.

Integrity-- is the cornerstone on which all other qualities must rest. Two people, a college president and a Democratic former congressman have cited this quality as the reason they support my candidacy.

Communication—is essential to a healthy organization, and the subject I have taught--**Managerial Communication**--as an adjunct professor at SPU in the MBA program. This is a very strong skill set of mine and includes speaking, writing, persuasion, and motivation.

“Quick study”—is the quality that grows from 25 years as a journalist: being handed a news story in the morning and needing to be an expert by that evening.

Curiosity—is essential to critical thinking: being skeptical, asking questions, wanting to learn, following up, gaining knowledge. I am a life-long learner.

Intuition—a people skill I have that aids in understanding human dynamics and particularly helpful in hiring and team building.

Optimism—is one of my leadership skills that converts to hope, can-do attitude and perseverance

Energy—I have a great capacity for people and tasks.

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

In 2006, I was recruited to Chair the Seattle Symphony Orchestra (SSO) at a critical juncture. The financial situation was dire with bankruptcy looming, the staff in disarray, and relations between union members and leadership so frayed that articles had appeared in the media which hampered fundraising and earned revenue. I immediately opened communication with all stakeholders, acquired financial analysis to determine our weaknesses and strengths, hired a new executive director, shored up the board, built teams to solve specific problems, met with the Mayor (the city owns Benaroya Hall) for his support, and secured corporations and private donors to provide funding. Within six months we had balanced the \$23million budget, found solutions to the concerns of labor, and built a solid professional staff. The next year, we continued making progress and again balanced the budget, all the while working on a strategic plan to close the structural deficit. I step down as Chair of the SSO this summer.

In 2005, as a member of the King County Elections Task Force, I worked with a skilled group of 10 public and private citizens, all leaders in their diverse fields, to make significant recommendations to restore integrity and public confidence in King County elections. We devoted hundreds of hours to this work, as we rigorously examined solutions to flaws in leadership and accountability. As none of the recommendations were acted on by the County Executive in a timely manner, we went back to him six months later and demanded action. We knew some of our recommendations, such as vote-by-mail would be met by opposition, but our members stood unanimously behind each recommendation. I believe our work has reduced costs, enhanced fairness and protected the most powerful of our civil rights, the right to vote.

In 1994, our elder son entered Kindergarten in Seattle Public Schools, which began my “adventure” in parental involvement in the schools. In 1998, I created a model for public/private fundraising which we implemented in our local elementary and others adopted in partnership with the Alliance for Education. I testified at the school board about enrollments and neighborhood schools. I studied demographics and WASL achievement scores and served as a subcommittee member on the Governor’s A+ Commission. In 2005, as Executive Director of the Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences, I looked at the need for better science education with the superintendent and other leaders in the school district, and committed nearly \$1 million of our foundation resources to implementing inquiry science training and curriculum in Seattle’s middle and high schools. This investment along with commitment from teachers and administrators, lifted science test scores.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

In addition to the three listed above:

1984 and 1988 I attended and covered the national Democratic and Republican conventions, meeting and interviewing key delegates from the state about issues of importance to the city and the region. I consider a conversation with Reverend McKinney of Mt. Zion Baptist Church about *compromise* to be one that has helped define my view of the political process. I am a centrist who brings people together to solve complex problems.

1981 As a TV news anchor I produced a series of reports on fire safety which resulted in a widely viewed documentary about prevention of fire and burns. I was awarded Fire Educator of the Year by the King County Fire Marshall's office. Our public safety officers are very important to the people of King County and I look forward to working with them on crucial safety issues and emergency preparedness.

1982-present My husband, an executive of the Boeing company, has worked there for 27 years. My understanding of the role of Boeing as a major employer, economic engine for the region and the country, and innovator in the field of aviation is both professional and personal. I also serve on the board of the Smithsonian's Air and Space museum with both Airbus and Boeing executives, and on other boards which enjoy Boeing's generosity to both the arts and human services in this region. As County Executive I will do all that is required to secure a long-term relationship with the Boeing company that will ensure job stability for years to come.

1978-2002 Union membership. As a long time union member, I understand the union negotiation process from both sides of the bargaining table. As chair of the Seattle Symphony we work with union players and attorneys in negotiation of collective bargaining agreements and the settlement of grievances. I am the only candidate with this experience and I believe the only one who can work with the unions in accomplishing the difficult tasks we have ahead regarding county union employment and benefits.

1987 A month on assignment in China resulted in Emmy awards for a documentary I produced about Chinese history and culture. This experience provided me unique knowledge about Chinese culture, which is an important part of understanding the international community in our county, as well as the important role the region plays as a trade partner on the Pacific Rim.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

The office of County Executive has a dual role, that of a manager and as a leader on policy. While not everyone agrees on the policy direction of the former Executive, there is no doubt that he had a strong vision for our region. However, his failure to monitor his own departments and to intervene when problems emerged has failed the citizens and has left the task of rebuilding King County government to the next executive.

As a manager, the executive must be more than a figurehead. Just as I worked to improve operations in the elections division, I will be closely involved in the improvements needed in other struggling departments. Both the Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) and the Animal Shelter are high priorities for reform. While the council has tried to address the problems in both organizations, it needs a strong partner in the executive branch who is willing to recognize these problems and work cooperatively to address them.

Additionally, a strong executive must look both inward and outward to find solutions. As the head of an organization with close to 14,000 employees, she must recognize that there is great talent in her ranks, and that the abilities and commitment of county workers should be better enhanced. As one of the largest employers in the state, King County should look to its private sector counterparts such as Microsoft and Boeing, to see how these companies maximize their human resources. We need continuing education courses, like those offered by Microsoft, and leadership training opportunities like those offered by Boeing to encourage county employees to expand their horizons and bring back to county government the newest and best business practices. Service to county government is a noble profession and the next executive must work to restore not only the government's reputation but also the pride and professionalism of its dedicated workforce.

As the originator of all budget-related measures, she must work with other county officials not only to solve the immense deficit for this year and the next, but also to structure a stable fiscal environment that will allow for reasonable growth in county government and not the irresponsible cycle of surplus and out of control spending followed by deficits and massive cuts.

Finally, the county executive must be a strong and unifying voice for one of our country's largest and most diverse regions. She must work to repair the county's fractured relationship with the county's suburban cities, and reopen a productive dialogue with them on issues ranging from annexation and growth management, to jails and criminal justice. She must be a persuasive communicator, both in advocating for change from within, as well as an ambassador to the State and Federal Government and the private sector. Major employers must be convinced that King County is the best place to do business for their employees and their own bottom line.