

2010 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
	LARRY (nickname)	MITCHELL

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

King County District Court Judge, Position 7, Northeast Electoral District

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

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

19 years

5. How long have you resided in King County?

19 years

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: **Elect Larry Mitchell Judge**

Address: **P.O. Box 23036**

City/State/Zip: **Seattle, WA 98102**

Campaign Phone: **425-753-1800**

Campaign Fax: **N/A**

Campaign E-mail: **larry57297@yahoo.com**

Campaign Website: **Pending**

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)
City of Redmond, WA Prosecuting Attorney	Appointive	1994 to present	Managing attorney

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

Office Title	Year of Run
N/A	

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.)

I have been a prosecutor for the City of Redmond for 16 years. Prior to that position I held a customer service job with Eastern Airlines for 17 years. The company went bankrupt in 1989 and I abruptly became unemployed. After several years of searching I secured employment with Redmond as a code enforcement officer and thereafter prosecutor. I have found working in the court system to be next to family the most rewarding thing that I have done in my life. As a prosecutor I have participated in every form of proceeding held in district court from arraignments to trials and have argued appeals in King County Superior Court and the Washington Supreme Court. I believe in the constitution and the legal system and have made a personal commitment to see that all persons before the courts receive fair and respectful treatment. It has been my goal to achieve justice in the thousands of criminal and traffic infraction cases I have handled. Justice comes in many forms – dismissal, conviction, or something in between – and must be measured on the merits of each case. It is important to me to do the right thing and to see that people are treated fairly. It has been a source of satisfaction to me that my efforts together with those of fellow attorneys and judges have always sought outcomes that are morally and legally correct for the individuals involved.

As a result of my experiences in life and the legal system I have developed a strong sense of responsibility and justice, a sense of what the right outcome should be based on the law and the evidence. I have argued many cases but a judge has always made the final decisions in those cases. I would like to apply that sense of justice in making decisions as a judge. I am not seeking election as a career move. I currently have a job that is both challenging and rewarding. Being a judge would allow me an opportunity to make decisions that respect the rights of individuals and have a positive influence on their lives. I want to use the skills and abilities I have developed over a lifetime to make the community a better place. This country has bestowed many blessings upon me and I want to give back by working to achieve justice as a judge in my chosen profession. Justice for one is justice for all.

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

By temperament I have a calm and respectful demeanor. My experience working under stressful conditions in customer service employment and in court has given me an ability to remain cool under fire. I am an avid reader and enjoy nothing more than discovering a new word that I can add to my vocabulary. I am patient and a good listener, necessary attributes for anyone who works in the court system. Although I sometimes have to make decisions on short notice I am diligent in preparation and therefore able to make them in a thoughtful manner. I take my role as an officer of the court seriously and am scrupulously honest in my dealings with defense counsel and judges. I regard my word as my bond. I am mindful of my responsibilities as a prosecutor and am committed to fair treatment for all. The aforementioned qualities and characteristics are necessary for a judge to carry out her/his duties and render just decisions.

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 1969 I played on my high school football team. Before the season expectations were that the team would be good and would win its regional championship. The season began and we lost our first game. We players were disappointed and discouraged about the defeat. Our coach, who I came to regard as one of the most influential men in my life, told us that with sufficient dedication and hard work we could still achieve our goal. I took his words to heart and did my best to practice and play hard. Although I was not one of the better players on the team the coach made me feel that my contribution to the effort was valuable. We went on to win 13 games in a row and not only won the regional championship but the state championship as well. That season remains one of my proudest accomplishments in my life. It taught me lessons about hard work, teamwork, and the worth of an individual. All are good things for a judge to know.

Several years ago I was standing in a parking lot and a woman approached me. She called me by name and said she was a victim in a domestic violence case that I had prosecuted. I did not remember her or the case she referenced. She told me that at the time she did not want the defendant to be charged and was very angry that the City went forward with the prosecution. Although she did not mention the outcome she thanked me for disregarding her wishes and proceeding with the case. She said that the City's effort to hold her abuser accountable made her realize that she was free to make choices and that she did not have to remain in an abusive domestic situation. She told me that she ended her relationship with the defendant and went on to build a healthier life for herself. She thanked me again, told me the case had been a turning point in her life, and walked away. I was most gratified to learn that my efforts to enforce the law had such a positive effect on her life; for her justice was achieved. The lesson here for a judge is to always try to do the right thing based on the law and the evidence, no matter what obstacles might lay in the way.

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.

I have served as a volunteer lawyer for the Eastside Legal Assistance Program for the past 16 years and have advised economically disadvantaged persons on a variety of legal issues. Some of the individuals who consulted with me wanted advice on complex problems beyond my expertise but most had relatively simple matters that I could solve for them or direct them to someone who could. I was able to take what to these individuals regarded as insurmountable problems and reduce them to manageable situations. Very often the process involved breaking down the issue into smaller parts and dealing with the parts one by one. This accomplished two things: it taught the person what law applied and empowered her/him to take charge and create her own solutions. The same method of analysis can apply to a judge's decision-making process. Complex issues can be reduced to simpler parts and then be appropriately decided. If the decision involves the imposition of a sanction on a defendant it can be done in such a way that gives him/her an opportunity to learn from his experience in the courts and allow him to control his own destiny after the case ends.

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

A judge's paramount duty is to decide cases in such a way that justice is achieved and the community is protected. In practical terms a judge presides at a variety of court hearings: arraignments, pre-trials, motions, jury and bench trials, and sentencing/review hearings. Throughout the process the judge must insure that the rights of all parties are respected and that everyone has a meaningful chance to be heard before a decision is made. The judge must conduct the proceeding in a fashion that both appears fair and is in fact fair. The law is what makes society civil and ensures that an individual is free to make choices in her/his own life so long as those choices do not infringe upon the rights of others. The aforementioned duties are mandated by the constitution and are therefore most important. A judge also has some responsibilities in the area of court management and budgeting. While they are important to the functioning of the court system especially in times of shrinking resources they are not as important to the constitutionally mandated duties mentioned above.