

2010 RAVEN SOCIETY CANDIDATE POSITION SURVEY

Please feel free to attach as many pages as are necessary to include your complete answers.

1. Name: **Brandon Cook**
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2. Website: **www.cookforcommission.org**

3. For which office are you running?

Blount County Commission, District 1, Seat A

4. What is your professional background and current occupation?

Banking and Finance

5. Please list high school(s) attended and any higher education with degrees earned, if any.

· William Blount High School Honor Graduate · Pellissippi State Community College – Associates Degree · University of Tennessee – Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a concentration on state and local government. History Minor

6. List professional, governmental, community service or other relevant organizational affiliations you have maintained within the past 10 years. List approximate dates of service.

· Blount County Democratic Party Chair – 2005-2007 · Pellissippi State Alumni Board of Directors – Current · H.O.M.E. Inc – Active participant – 2009-Current · Attends Everett Hills Baptist Church – 2008-Current

7. Please comment on how your own background and skills would assist you as an officeholder.

1. Organization and Planning 2. Active Listening for Understanding Group Needs and Characteristics 3. Courage and Initiative to Solve Problems

8. The Raven Society Mission Statement is at the top of this page. Do you support this mission? Why or why not? If elected, what will you do in support of this mission?

I do support the mission. My campaign focus is on Blount County's economy, the education of our children and our community character. "You have to know where you came from, to know where you are going". By supporting the mission, I am protecting traditions and the beauty of where we live. Overall, the direction that I want to take for Blount County relies on accuracy of our budgets and support of our schools. Our community involvement ties this together.

9. What do you see as the three most critical issues facing Blount County? Being as specific as possible, please tell us how you will address each of these issues.

1. Economy 2. Education 3. Community ***1. One of the top issues today is the economy, both local and national. I believe there are workable solutions available that will boost the local economy and keep our people working. By taking more aggressive actions we can bring new and higher paying jobs to Blount County while securing the jobs that already exist. However, the best way to improve our economy is to make smart investments - and the smartest investment we can make is in education.*** ***2. Education is the single most important issue facing a governing body. By providing a first-rate, quality education for our children we are developing the progressive minds that will lead us into the future. Our children will be the ones who will build our businesses, protect and serve us on the streets, invest our resources wisely and continue to develop better ways of life for our community.*** ***3. As a fifth generation Blount County native, I feel blessed to have the knowledge and traditions of my family to strengthen my sense of community. I have grown to understand that one's friends, family and county-wide neighbors can come together not just in times of need but in a time for growing and uniting our community. I will work hard to bring that common unity my grandfather taught me back to Blount County.***

10. Rapid development in Blount County has implications for the County budget, as well as for our air and water quality, scenic heritage and community character. If elected, what principles would guide your decisions regarding growth and development?

· The current zoning laws need to be stronger. I realize that there are citizens in Blount County that differ on the idea of zoning. I can understand both arguments. However, zoning is necessary to ensure positive planned growth in Blount County. Currently this is not happening. The current County Commission has allowed "spot zoning"

to occur, allowing businesses to encroach on residential areas. By tightening up our current zoning laws, we can keep residential areas residential and commercial areas commercial, allowing property owners the ability to better enjoy their surroundings.

11. Do you support the extension of the Pellissippi Parkway (PPE) from Old Knoxville Highway (SR 33) to US 321?

a.

b. Please explain *why* you support or oppose the extension, including any statistics or studies you may know of which support your opinion.

Support or opposition of this project would be premature due to the ongoing case studies.

12. If the PPE is eventually built, how will you address the development pressures this potential new road will bring, including impacts on Blount County's secondary roads, schools, public services, air and water quality?

See question 10.

13. Which, if any, of the proposals presented by the Growth Management Advisory Committee (GMAC) would you recommend using to raise funds to purchase and preserve green space in the rural parts of the county?

I support all proposals that promote smart growth and allow for government to implement fees for bad growth decisions. However, by proper planning and development of the County's growth, it would place the County in a collaborative rather than a competitive position with its municipalities in managing the growth of our County.

14. If elected, please describe how you would incorporate the Five Guiding Policies of the county's Policies Plan into your own decision-making process.

I agree with all Five Guiding Policies laid out by the Hunter Interests Inc. The Five Guiding Policies should be a reference on all votes that impact the County.

15. What is your vision for Blount County in 20 years?

We need to see Blount County taking steps to become a leader in education, economic and community development. These three issues are the foundation of what Blount County will be in the coming years. By proper planning and investing, Blount County can be a state wide model in 20 years. We must start this process today.