



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION**  
**Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings**

**Family Court**  
**(New Candidate)**

Full Name: Thomas Murray Bultman

Business Address: P. O. Box 2038, Sumter, SC 29151-2038 and actual physical address of Bryan Law Firm of SC, L.L.P. is 17 East Calhoun Street, Sumter, SC, 29150

Business Telephone: (803) 775-1263

1. Why do you want to serve as a Family Court Judge?  
I look forward to being able to apply my knowledge of South Carolina family law to the cases I will be hearing and to treating the lawyers and litigants with courtesy and respect. In addition, I will enjoy serving as a Family Court Judge.
  
2. Do you plan to serve your full term if elected?  
Yes
  
3. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day?  
No
  
4. Have you met the statutory requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice?  
Yes
  
5. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated?  
Ex parte communications should be avoided; however, when an emergency exists allowing ex parte communication would be appropriate. Any order I would issue as a result of ex parte communication would be without prejudice or prejudicial value. I would follow the directives of Canon 3B(7).
  
6. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you?

If I still had any financial ties with my law firm or its partners as a result of selling my interest in the law firm, selling my interest in the land and building where our law firm is located or selling my interest in an unimproved lot which I own with my law partners, then I would recuse myself from presiding at any contested matters in which the law firm's partners or associates are involved. I would not recuse myself because an individual is a lawyer-legislator.

7. If you disclosed something that had the appearance of bias, but you believed it would not actually prejudice your impartiality, what deference would you give a party that requested your recusal? Would you grant such a motion?  
I most likely would recuse myself.
8. How would you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative?  
I would inform those lawyers and litigants of such financial or social involvement.
9. What standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality?  
I would follow the directives of Canon D(5).
10. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct or appearance of infirmity of a lawyer or of a fellow judge?  
Depending on the circumstances I would do one or more of the following: speak directly with the individual; notify the individual with supervisory responsibility over the individual; or make a referral to an assistance program such as Lawyers Helping Lawyers or the South Carolina Bar in accordance with Rule 428, SCACR. Depending upon the gravity of the conduct that has come to my attention, I would report the individual to the appropriate disciplinary authority. I would follow the directives of Cannon 3(d)(1) and (2).
11. Are you a member of any organization or association that, by policy or practice, prohibits or limits its membership on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin? If so, please identify the entity and explain if this organization practices invidious discrimination on any basis.  
No
12. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe.

Yes, Sumter Rotary Club's Farm To Table project.

13. Do you have any business activities that you would envision remaining involved with if elected to the bench?

No

14. Since family court judges do not have law clerks, how would you handle the drafting of orders?

At temporary hearings, I would try to announce my decision in the courtroom and instruct one of the lawyers to prepare a proposed temporary order. If at the conclusion of a hearing or a trial I was unable to announce my decision, then I would prepare a memorandum which contains my decision and send it to the lawyers with instructions for one lawyer to prepare the proposed order.

15. If elected, what method would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines?

I will enter the information as to any deadline, well in advance, into the calendars in my computer and will have my administrative assistant do the same in her computer. In other words, a tickler system will be used.

16. If elected, what specific actions or steps would you take to ensure that the guidelines of the Guardian Ad Litem statutes are followed during the pendency of a case?

Monitoring the cases to which I am assigned to ensure that the guidelines are followed.

17. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy?

I am opposed to "judicial activism". I would only interpret the law as I believe a judge should not be setting or promoting public policy as that is a function of the legislature.

18. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities would you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system?

Speaking at civic clubs or religious groups when I am invited to do so. Speaking at continuing legal education seminars when I am invited to do so.

19. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge would strain personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? How would you plan to address this?

My serving as a Family Court Judge would not strain personal relationships.

20. Would you give any special considerations to a *pro se* litigant in family court?  
I would provide an explanation as to how a hearing is to be conducted and/or the purpose of the hearing, but I would hold a pro se litigant to the same standards as I would a lawyer.
21. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality?  
No
22. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved?  
I would inform the lawyers and litigants of the minimum financial interest and I would decide on a case by case basis if I should recuse myself.
23. Are you a member of any organization or association that, by policy or practice, prohibits or limits its membership on the basis of race, sex, religion, or national origin? If so, please identify the entity and explain if this organization practices invidious discrimination on any basis.  
No
24. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period?  
Yes
25. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply?  
At all times treat all individuals with courtesy and respect.
26. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public who would appear before you, especially with a criminal defendant? No. Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant? No

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ANSWERS TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS ARE TRUE AND COMPLETE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

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Thomas M. Bultman

Sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of July, 2017.

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(L.S.)  
Julie S. Hubbard  
Notary Public for South Carolina  
My commission expires: May 26, 2020