



**JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION**

**Sworn Statement to be included in Transcript of Public Hearings**

**Circuit Court  
(New Candidate)**

Full Name: Dale E. Van Slambrook

Business Address: PO Box 609, Moncks Corner, SC 29461

Business Telephone: (843) 719-4437

1. Why do you want to serve as a Circuit Court judge? I believe that based upon my depth of experience as a practicing attorney, service as a Criminal Court Judge, Master-In-Equity, a Special Circuit Court Judge and as Adult Drug Court Judge, I have the training, education and experience to effectively perform the duties of a Circuit Court Judge. Further, based upon these same life and educational experiences and my temperament, I believe that I would be able to apply a common sense and practical approach to the many duties of a Circuit 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 Constitutional 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? Only under extreme emergency situations as allowed by the Rules or for scheduling purposes only.
  
6. 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 would likely grant such motion absent exigent circumstances.
  
7. How would you handle the appearance of impropriety because of the financial or social involvement of your spouse or a close relative? I would offer to recuse myself and I would likely grant such request absent exigent or emergency circumstances.
  
8. What standards would you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? I would endeavor to not intentionally accept any gifts or social hospitality from persons or entities that would likely or even possibly appear before me.
  
9. 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 severity of the misconduct, I would personally approach the offending person and notify Court Administration, if necessary.
  
10. 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. None

11. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? Please describe. I have been involved in fundraising efforts for the Alzheimer's Association. I limited acceptance of donations to family and close friends.
  
12. Do you have any business activities that you would envision remaining involved with if elected to the bench? None other than property rental
  
13. If elected, how would you handle the drafting of orders? In routine matters, I would prepare the Orders or provide instructions to the Clerk to draft the Order. In complicated matters wherein both parties are represented, I would provide general instructions to the prevailing party advising them to prepare a draft Order with copies to the adverse party. Thereafter, I would finalize the Order myself.
  
14. If elected, what methods would you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines? Establish and monitor computer and paper calendaring systems.
  
15. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy? I feel my role is to apply the existing laws fairly, efficiently and in an unbiased manner. It would not be my role to create law or to promote or create public policy from the Bench.
  
16. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. If elected, what activities do you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system? Legal

education by speaking at Seminars and teaching to laypersons and the Bar. Participation as a judge or coach in Moot Court and Mock trial competitions.

17. 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 address this? I do not anticipate that my service would strain personal relationships.
  
18. The following list contains five categories of offenders that would perhaps regularly appear in your court. Discuss your philosophy on sentencing for these classes of offenders.
  - a. Repeat offenders:

Generally, each Criminal Defendant must be individually evaluated upon relevant facts surrounding the crime committed and the charges upon which they were convicted or plead. The correlation between the present crime and prior crimes would influence sentencing to the greatest degree. Repeat violent offenders would likely require greater punishment as opposed to repeat drug offenders who may benefit from the imposition of treatment or a rehabilitation program. Ultimately, each sentence should be tailored to not only the crime and the history but the potential for rehabilitation of the individual Defendant.
  
  - b. Juveniles (that have been waived to the Circuit Court):

The likelihood of the imposition of treatment or a rehabilitation program would likely be greater for juveniles. However, based upon the Defendant's exposure to the Criminal System as well as the effectiveness of prior rehabilitative efforts may require more of a punishment approach sentencing.

c. White collar criminals:

A crime is no less serious because it may fall into the category of "White collar" crime. However, if such crimes involved or require restitution the ability of such a person to regain employment and therefore fund restitution should also be considered.

d. Defendants with a socially and/or economically disadvantaged background:

Background, good or bad, is not and should not be a decisive factor in fashioning a criminal sentence. However, the Court must be mindful of a person's ability to pay, ability to understand and grasp the significance of rehabilitative efforts as not to frustrate their intent.

e. Elderly defendants or those with some infirmity:

Longevity and health concerns are additional factors which must be added to the factors for consideration in sentencing. If health or age restrictions already impose limits on an elderly Defendant some lessor or more restrictive punishment may have the same effect as a more stringent sentence on a younger person.

19. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? No
20. Would you hear a case where you or a member of your family held a *de minimis* financial interest in a party involved? Not likely but would be evaluated on a case by case basis.
21. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses for the past reporting period? Yes

22. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge and when do these rules apply? Courteous, calm and attentive. These rules would apply twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

23. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public, especially with a criminal defendant? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or pro se litigants? In most if not all situations, it is not appropriate to express anger to an attorney, litigant or Pro Se Litigant.

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

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Sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Print Name)

Notary Public for South Carolina

My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_