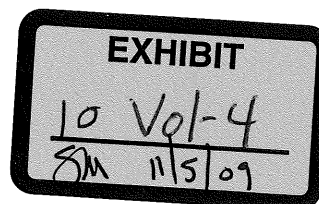


JUDICIAL MERIT SELECTION COMMISSION
PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE

Court, Position, and Seat # for which you are applying:
Master-in-Equity, Sumter County

1. NAME: Mr. Richard Lauren Booth
BUSINESS ADDRESS: Office mail:
Box 2756
Sumter, SC 29151
Office delivery:
17 E. Calhoun St.
Sumter, SC 29150
Master in Equity mail:
141 N. Main St.
Sumter, SC 29150
E-MAIL ADDRESS: Master in Equity: sumtercountymie@yahoo.com
TELEPHONE NUMBER: (office): 803-775-6232
Master: 803-774-3884
2. Date of Birth: 1952
Place of Birth: Sumter County SC
3. Are you a citizen of South Carolina? Yes
Have you been a resident of this state for at least the immediate past five years? Yes
5. Family Status: Married on September 12, 1981, to Gayle Michele Robb Booth.
Never divorced. Two children.
6. Have you served in the military? No
7. List each college and law school you attended, including the dates of your attendance, the degrees you received, and if you left an institution without receiving a degree, the reason for your departure.
(a) Clemson University, 1970-74, BS, Financial Management
(b) USC School of Law, 1974-77, JD
8. List the states in which you have been admitted to practice law and the year of each admission. Also list any states in which you took the bar exam but were never admitted to the practice of law. If you took the bar exam more than once in any of the states listed, please indicate the number of times you took the exam in each state. South Carolina, 1977, in good standing.
9. List the significant activities in which you took part during your attendance at college, graduate, and law school. Give the dates you were involved in these activities and list any leadership positions you held. ATO Fraternity, Clemson University, 1971-74
10. Describe your continuing legal or judicial education during the past five years Include only the title and date of any continuing legal or judicial education course completed



2004

Not available online

2005

- (a) Cannon Fin. Inst. Charitable Giving 06/28/05;
- (b) Cannon Fin. Inst. Recent Dev. 08/16/05;
- (c) Chicago Title Claims Seminar 11/10/05;
- (d) SC Family Ct. Bench/Bar 12/02/05;
- (e) Tips from the Bench 12/9/05;
- (f) New SC Trust Code 12/14/05;

2006

- (a) Cannon Fin. Inst. Recent Dev. 5/23/06;
- (b) First Amer. Title Underwriting Seminar 10/13/06;
- (c) Chicago Title Claims Seminar 11/9/06;

2007

- (a) Master in Equity Bench/Bar 10/12/07;
- (b) Chicago Title Claims Seminar 11/15/07;

2008

- (a) 2008 Judicial Conference 8/20/08;
- (b) Master in Equity Bench/Bar 10/10/08.

11. Have you taught law-related courses or lectured at bar association conferences, educational institutions, or continuing legal or judicial education programs?

Taught business law courses at Sumter Technical College.

12. List all published books and articles you have written and give citations and the dates of publication for each. None

13. List all courts in which you have been admitted to practice and list the dates of your admission. Give the same information for administrative bodies that require a special admission to practice.

- (a) Admitted to practice before the State Courts of South Carolina in 1977;
- (b) Also admitted to practice before the Federal District Court in 1979.

14. Describe chronologically your legal experience since graduation from law school and include a list of all law firms with which you have been associated. Describe the general character of your practice and divide it into periods with dates if its character has changed over the years.

SEEKING SAME JUDGESHIP

15. What is your rating in Martindale-Hubbell? BV as far as I know.

22. Have you ever held judicial office?

YES. Special Referee for Sumter County (Supreme Ct. appointment) June 2006 –December 2006; Interim Master in Equity for Sumter County (Supreme Court Appointment), December 2006 – February 2008; Master in Equity for Sumter County (appointed by Governor), February 2008 – present. Circuit Court (common pleas) jurisdiction once case is referred.

23. If the answer to question 22 is yes, describe or list five of your most significant orders or opinions and give the citations if they were reported. Also list citations to any appellate review of these orders or opinions.
Arrow Bonding v. Warren, not reported
Not aware of any other orders that were especially significant.
24. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office. No public office.
25. List all employment you had while serving as a judge (whether full-time or part-time, contractual or at will, consulting or otherwise) other than elected judicial office. Specify your dates of employment, employer, major job responsibilities, and supervisor. None
26. Have you ever been an unsuccessful candidate for elective, judicial, or other public office? NO
27. Have you ever been engaged in any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law, teaching of law, or holding judicial or other public office? No
28. Are you now an officer or director or involved in the management of any business enterprise?
None other than partner in defunct family farming business which now holds installment contracts from sale of residential lots. Service indefinite.
29. A complete, current financial net worth statement was provided to the Commission.
30. Describe any financial arrangements or business relationships you have, or have had in the past, that could constitute or result in a possible conflict of interest in the position you seek. Explain how you would resolve any potential conflict of interest.
Contract for sale of family land to City of Sumter, closing expected in mid-August. Not aware of any potential conflict of interest resulting from same, but if any arose I would recuse myself from that case.
31. Have you ever been arrested, charged, or held by federal, state, or other law enforcement authorities for violation or for suspicion of violation of any federal law or regulation, state law or regulation, or county or municipal law, regulation, or ordinance, or any other law, including another country's law? No
32. Have you, to your knowledge, ever been under federal, state, or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute? No
33. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure ever been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? Have you ever defaulted on a student loan? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? No
34. Have you ever been sued, either personally or professionally, that is, have you ever been named as defendant or respondent in any court of law? No
36. Are you now or have you ever been employed as a "lobbyist," as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(13), or have you acted in the capacity of a "lobbyist's principal," as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(14)? No
37. Since filing with the Commission your letter of intent to run for judicial office, have you accepted lodging, transportation, entertainment, food, meals,

- beverages, money, or any other thing of value as defined by S.C. Code § 2-17-10(1) from a lobbyist or lobbyist's principal? If so, please specify the item or items you received, the date of receipt, and the lobbyist or lobbyist's principal involved. No
38. S.C. Code § 8-13-700 provides, in part, that "[n]o public official, public member, or public employee may knowingly use his official office, membership, or employment to obtain an economic interest for himself, a member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated." Please detail any knowledge you have of any formal charges or informal allegations against you or any other candidate for violations of these provisions. None
39. S.C. Code § 8-13-765 provides, in part, that "[n]o person may use government personnel, equipment, materials, or an office building in an election campaign." Please detail any knowledge you have of any formal charges or informal allegations against you or any other candidate for violations of these provisions. None
40. Itemize (by amount, type, and date) all expenditures, other than those for travel and room and board, made by you, or on your behalf in furtherance of your candidacy for the position you seek. None
41. List the amount and recipient of all contributions made by you or on your behalf to members of the General Assembly since the announcement of your intent to seek election to a judgeship. None
42. Have you directly or indirectly requested the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? Have you received the assurance of any public official or public employee that they will seek the pledge of any member of the General Assembly as to your election for the position for which you are being screened? None
43. Have you requested a friend or colleague to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf? Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf? No
44. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf solicited or collected funds to aid in the promotion of your candidacy? No
45. Have you or has anyone acting on your behalf contacted members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission about your candidacy or intention to become a candidate? No
46. List all bar associations and professional organizations of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any offices you have held in such groups.
South Carolina Bar Association
47. List all civic, charitable, educational, social, and fraternal organizations of which you are or have been a member during the past five years and include any offices held in such a group, any professional honors, awards, or other forms of recognition received and not listed elsewhere.

- (a) Sumter County Museum Board of Directors
 - (b) Chairman, Sumter County Zoning Board of Appeals (resigned)
 - (c) Chairman, Sumter County Cultural Commission (term expired)
 - (d) Sumter County Gallery of Art Board of Directors
48. Provide any other information that may reflect positively or negatively on your candidacy, or which you believe should be disclosed in connection with consideration of you for nomination for the position you seek.
49. References:
- (a) William J. Holmes, III
VP, Wachovia Bank
4 N. Washington St.
Sumter, SC, 29150
 - (b) S. Lathan Roddey, III
Box 850
Sumter, SC 29151
 - (c) Michael Self
P. O. Box 2197
Sumter, SC 29151
 - (d) Dr. John B. Pate, Jr.
3620 Queens Chapel Road
Sumter, SC 29150
 - (e) Stephen M. Creech
Box 850
Sumter, SC 29151

YOUR SIGNATURE WILL BE HELD TO CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF ANY PROCEEDING BEFORE A GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE OR ANY INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR CREDIT.

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

Signature: Richard Booth

Date: July 28, 2009

RICHARD L. BOOTH LLC
ATTORNEY AT LAW
17 E. CALHOUN SUMTER STREET
P. O. BOX 2756
SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA 29151
TELEPHONE 803-775-6232 FACSIMILE 803-775-2251
rbooth@boothlawoffice.com

August 25, 2009

Judicial Merit Selection Commission
P. O. Box 142
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Attention: Jane O. Shuler, Chief Counsel

In re: Correction of Personal Data Questionnaire

Dear Ms. Shuler:

I must amend and correct my answer to question 34 of my Personal Data Questionnaire dated July 28, 2009, to reflect that I have been previously named as a defendant in a lawsuit. At the time I prepared my application, I simply did not recall that I had been previously so named, and I apologize for this unintentional oversight. Since then, I have been contacted by a member of the law firm that brought the lawsuit in question who advised me that they had been contacted by an officer of the State Law Enforcement Division conducting an investigation in connection with my judicial application, which in turn caused me to recall the situation.

By my present recollection, the lawsuit in question was a foreclosure action brought against third party property owners due to their default on land-mobile home mortgage financing. The real property in question had been previously bought by them from the surviving trustees of a family trust created by my grandfather in 1971, and from me, due to the fact that my father, who was originally a trustee, had died and my share of the trust as beneficiary had been distributed to me. At the time the deed was delivered to them, our deed template was corrected in the signature element to add me as a grantor in my individual capacity and to delete my father as trustee due to his prior death. However, the correction apparently caused my name to be substituted for my father's in the prelude to the granting clause of the deed, such that it mistakenly named me as trustee. The end result, which escaped notice at the time, was that I signed the deed correctly but it recited my name incorrectly at the beginning of the document.

When the law firm representing the foreclosing plaintiff brought the foreclosure suit, their title examiner had apparently discovered the mistaken reference on the face of the deed, and rather than just contact me to help correct the oversight, they named me as a defendant in the lawsuit for the sole purpose of quieting any title problem that might have existed due to the mistake in the deed. In my opinion, the mistake was only a scrivener's error having no effect on quality of title, but they chose to proceed with correction in the lawsuit as was their prerogative.

Shortly thereafter, I executed and delivered a quitclaim deed for any interest that I might still have owned in the subject property, which was none, and I was dismissed from the lawsuit. This dismissal was recorded in the Clerk's office on February 22, 2007. I had no interest of any kind in the property which was the subject of the lawsuit, nor were the other named defendants (the debtors in the foreclosure action) in any way or manner related or obligated to me or any other member of my family, nor had I represented them at any time, nor did I have any personal knowledge of any evidentiary facts surrounding the foreclosure of their mortgage and certainly had no bias of any kind regarding them. I am surprised to now find that my name apparently continues to be listed as a defendant in the case caption on the records of the Sumter County Clerk of Court as the dismissal was and is of record.

Again, I apologize for this oversight. These events took place in early 2007 and since my involvement was tangential to a default foreclosure action, and I was dismissed as a defendant without substantive involvement in the case, it simply slipped my mind. I don't believe I have thought of it since then until now. I do wish the record to be accurate, however, and so I ask that my answer be amended as referred to above.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Booth', written in a cursive style.

Richard L. Booth

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

**Master-in-Equity
(Incumbent)**

Full Name: Richard Lauren Booth
Business Address: 17 East Calhoun Street
Sumter, SC 29150
Business Telephone: 803-774-3884 (Master in Equity)
803-775-6232 (Law Office)

1. Do you plan to serve your full term if re-appointed? Yes
2. Do you have any plans to return to private practice one day? My position is a part-time one by statute, and I continue to maintain my private practice with the balance of my time.
3. Have you met the Constitutional requirements for this position regarding age, residence, and years of practice? Yes
4. What is your philosophy regarding *ex parte* communications? Are there circumstances under which you could envision *ex parte* communications being tolerated? There should be no *ex parte* communications. The only exceptions that are at times tolerated are initial communications regarding scheduling that do not prejudice the other party or discuss any aspect of the matter.
5. What is your philosophy on recusal, especially in situations in which lawyer-legislators, former associates, or law partners are to appear before you? The parties and their attorneys should be given full and complete disclosure of all matters of which the judge is aware which are or which might be seen as a conflict of interest as set forth in Rule 501, Canon 3(E), Appellate Court Rules, and the judge should then adhere to the policy set forth in Paragraph (F) of same.
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? If any party desires my recusal after disclosure of a matter that was a ground for disqualification under a liberal interpretation the Rule, I would recuse myself.
7. What standards have you set for yourself regarding the acceptance of gifts or social hospitality? I do not accept them.
8. How would you handle a situation in which you became aware of misconduct of a lawyer or of a judge? If the misconduct was prohibited by the applicable ethical or disciplinary guidelines of the Code of Professional Responsibility or the Canons of Judicial Conduct, I would report them to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel.

9. Are you affiliated with any political parties, boards or commissions that need to be re-evaluated? I am on the Board of Directors of the Sumter County Museum Foundation, which up until now has acted only to supervise the Museum's endowment. However, due to decline in the value of the portfolio, the Board has elected to expand into fundraising. Even though I have instructed the Board on several occasions that I am prohibited from engaging in fundraising and have refused to do so, the focus of the Board is changing so completely to fundraising that I have advised the Chairman that I am of the opinion I ought to resign.
10. Have you engaged in any fund-raising activities with any political, social, community, or religious organizations? No.
11. How do you handle the drafting of orders? When the matter before me is uncontested or is a contested one in which the issues are relatively simple or straightforward, I normally request the attorneys involved to draft proposed orders to be reviewed by all attorneys involved before submission to me, after which I will make or request changes to make it consistent with my ruling. However, in more complex contested matters, or those in which I believe that the attorneys will not address the issues or law in a manner that I desire, I will draft the order myself.
12. What methods do you use to ensure that you and your staff meet deadlines? Physical and computer calendaring.
13. What is your philosophy on "judicial activism," and what effect should judges have in setting or promoting public policy? Unless there is no prior guidance in the case law of this state, I believe that a lower court should apply the existing law of the state, statutory and common, to matters before the court. I am not a proponent of lower court judges setting or promoting public policy.
14. Canon 4 allows a judge to engage in activities to improve the law, legal system, and administration of justice. What activities do you plan to undertake to further this improvement of the legal system? I actively participate in the Masters Association to find ways to make our Equity Courts as much as practicable act uniformly and efficiently.
15. Do you feel that the pressure of serving as a judge strains personal relationships (i.e. spouse, children, friends, or relatives)? No.
How do you address this?
16. Are you involved in any active investments from which you derive additional income that might impair your appearance of impartiality? No, though at the moment, as disclosed elsewhere in the application paperwork, my family has a pending land sale to the City of Sumter which, until its completion, would fall into that category.
17. 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 have to say

yes in the limited area of local banking, where I maintain banking relationships with every bank in Sumter and actually have a small amount of common stock in Bank of America. The financial or any other interest I derive from any of them does not exceed *de minimis* amounts nor does it affect my judgment in any case involving them. Otherwise, my answer is NO unless the Rules of Canon 3 (e) and (f) were observed.

18. Do you belong to any organizations that discriminate based on race, religion, or gender? No.
19. Have you met the mandatory minimum hours requirement for continuing legal education courses? Yes.
20. What do you feel is the appropriate demeanor for a judge? Serious, pleasant, dignified, mannered, even-tempered.
21. Would the rules that you expressed in your previous answer apply only while you are on the bench or in chambers, or do these rules apply seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day? All the time.
22. Do you feel that it is ever appropriate to be angry with a member of the public who would appear before you? Is anger ever appropriate in dealing with attorneys or a pro se litigant? No, except on the rare occasion when a member of the public, attorney, or *pro se* litigant is clearly and obviously attempting to subvert the operation of the court and the judicial system and has continued to ignore repeated requests or orders to desist from further manifestation of that which is offensive to the court. Sometimes seeing or knowing the judge is getting angry can cause them to stop; even then, however, the judge should not act or make any ruling in anger.
23. How much money have you spent on your campaign? If it is over \$100, has that amount been reported to the House and Senate Ethics Committees? None.
24. While campaigning for this office, have you used judicial letterhead or the services of your staff for your campaign? No.
25. Have you sought or received the pledge of any legislator prior to this date? No.
26. Have you sought or been offered a conditional pledge of support by any legislator pending the outcome of your screening? No.
27. Have you asked any third parties to contact members of the General Assembly on your behalf before the final and formal screening report has been released? Are you aware of any friends or colleagues contacting members of the General Assembly on your behalf? No and No.
28. Have you contacted any members of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission? No.

29. Are you familiar with the 48-hour rule, which prohibits a candidate from seeking pledges for 48 hours after the draft report has been submitted? Yes.

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

s/ Richard Lauren Booth

Sworn to before me this 3rd day of August, 2009.

Notary Public for S.C.

My commission expires:09-15-2016