

Candidate	Question	Responses	Average Score
Sara Lewis	1. Briefly state your understanding of the evictions process in First City Court. What, if any, upgrades would you suggest to our evictions procedure? (+7)	<p>The eviction process requires a landlord to serve a tenant with a 5 Day Notice to Vacate, unless waived by the lease agreement. If the tenant doesn't vacate the premises, the landlord must file a Rule of Possession showing that they are entitled to evict the tenant for failure to pay rent, termination of the lease, or some other breach of the lease. The tenant will have the opportunity to attend a hearing in front of a judge before any eviction will be granted. The laws regarding evictions in Louisiana are found in Article 4701, et. seq. of the Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure.</p> <p>Evictions touch everything in New Orleans. We have almost twice the national average eviction rate- 5.2%, and it is even more alarmingly higher in neighborhoods where people of color live. In Black neighborhoods, one in four renters experienced a court-ordered eviction over the course of three years, compared to one in 24 in predominantly white areas. Beyond the obvious of causing homelessness and exacerbating the poverty cycle, this hurts our children's shot at success, causes mental health issues, and can lead to domestic violence. As a judge or judicial candidate, the judicial canons require that I remain independent and not advocate for changes to the law I will be applying as a judge. But I can ensure that everyone facing an eviction knows their rights and has a chance to be heard. I also plan to work with the Access to Justice Commission to implement a volunteer mediation program modeled after a successful program in Baton Rouge Family and City Court. With volunteer attorneys and law students, the court could provide - at no cost to the parties - an independent third party who is well versed in the law to aid them in finding a mutually agreed upon solution to their conflict.</p>	7
	2. Do you believe that landlords should be required to store security deposits in a second account to combat the issue of landlords who illegally withhold security deposits? Why or Why not? (+8)	I believe that while this is a good practice, this would not resolve the issue of illegally withholding security deposits, because the landlord could still withhold the deposit kept in a separate account. However, as a Judge I cannot legislate, and I will fairly and impartially apply the law.	7
	3. Do you think the City needs to build more affordable rental housing for very low-income residents in order to prevent evictions?	Yes. We need further development of rental housing to make housing more affordable for low income residents.	8
	4. Do you believe that a Tenant's Bill of Rights could help to create equity between landlords and tenants in the city? If so, what should it include, or not include? Please explain your answer.	<p>A Tenant's Bill of Rights would help the landlord-tenant relationship be fair and go smoothly, because both parties would have clear expectations about their rights and responsibilities. Most leases obligate a tenant to pay a security deposit, to maintain certain aspects of the apartment, to pay for utilities, etc., while not requiring as much out of a landlord. A Tenant's Bill of Rights could help even the playing field so tenants can feel a bit more secure in their homes.</p> <p>While a Judge may not legislate, I believe there are models in other jurisdictions, like Kansas City, Missouri, who adopted a Tenant's Bill of Rights last December, that we as judges can educate the legislature and the public about.</p>	7
	5. Do you believe that all tenants should have legal representation in eviction proceedings?	I think that housing is a fundamental right, and that there is a great disparity between parties who are self-represented and parties with legal representation. However, a judge cannot legislate, so this issue is left to the legislators.	8
	6. Do you believe that judges have discretion to award a tenant additional time to move? Why or Why not? (+8)	The law provides for judicial discretion, judicial control, equitable estoppel, and the abuse of rights doctrine in eviction proceedings. And a judge has the authority to set the date of eviction, but the Louisiana Civil Code article 4732 specifically requires the judge to grant an eviction "immediately" upon a showing that the lease was breached. A tenant may file an appeal to this judgement. It's vitally important that tenants know their rights in our system. Judges can play a key role in educating all parties.	7
	7. Do you believe that judges have discretion to require landlord to accept a payment plan? Why or why not? (+8)	The law allows for judicial discretion in all cases, but a judge must follow the law. The Civil Code requires a judge to grant an eviction if the facts warrant an eviction. It's important that judges listen and pay attention to the facts so they can apply the law correctly, and make sure all parties are aware of their rights and are able to assert them.	7
	8. Do you believe that judges have discretion to deny an eviction due to special circumstances? Why or why not? (+8)	Judges do not have the authority to deny an eviction, but they can allow a tenant additional time to move out in special circumstances. If a judge wanted to allow more than a few days, the law would have to change in Louisiana.	7
	9. Do you believe that judges should serve as mediators between tenants and landlords? Why or why not? (+8)	A Judge should not serve as a mediator because they may have to eventually rule on the dispute. I want to implement a volunteer mediation program modeled after a successful program in Baton Rouge Family and City Court. With volunteer attorneys and law students, the court could provide - at no cost to the parties - an independent third party who is well versed in the law to aid them in finding a mutually agreed upon solution to their conflict. Good	7
	10. Many of the tenants who are defendants in eviction proceedings in First City Court are lower-income residents and often earn wages hourly. Do you believe evictions proceedings should be upgraded to include after-hours hearings set on some evenings and weekends? (+8)	Absolutely. This is exactly the kind of creative solution that Judges are within their authority to implement. I'd be happy to spearhead this initiative, with the support of GNOHA, once I am elected. Working together we can make practical, effective changes that help everyone.	8
	Interview/Forum (Max - 21 points)		19
	Total Score		91

Candidate	Question	Responses	Average Score
Shaylece Harrison	1. Briefly state your understanding of the evictions process in First City Court. What, if any, upgrades would you suggest to our evictions procedure? (+7)	A landlord seeking to evict tenants/occupants, will need to provide them with a notice to pay or surrender the premises. If tenants/occupants fail to pay or vacate the premises by the required date, the landlord must file a Notice of Hearing for Eviction(landlord not allowed to accept rent prior to the hearing date). The tenant is served with the notice and must attend. During the hearing, the tenant can provide any evidence on why he or she should not be evicted. If the eviction is granted, the tenant is given a specified time to vacate and surrender the property to the landlord. If tenant fails to surrender premises the landlord must notify sheriff office to set up a time for sheriff to come out and the landlord must have people in place who can remove the tenant property to the curb side. The landlord is not allowed to remove the tenant's property from the premises without first going through this process. There is no self-help in Louisiana.	7
	2. Do you believe that landlords should be required to store security deposits in a second account to combat the issue of landlords who illegally withhold security deposits? Why or Why not? (+8)	Because this deals with legislation, I am unable to comment. This is something that should be address by your respected legislator.	6
	3. Do you think the City needs to build more affordable rental housing for very low-income residents in order to prevent evictions?	I do believe we need more affordable housing for individuals because as rents increase and incomes remain the same more and more people are going to need access to affordable housing	8
	4. Do you believe that a Tenant's Bill of Rights could help to create equity between landlords and tenants in the city? If so, what should it include, or not include? Please explain your answer.	Because this deals with legislation, I am unable to comment. This is something that should be address by your respected legislator.	6
	5. Do you believe that all tenants should have legal representation in eviction proceedings?	They should have legal representation. Many landlords have an attorney or representations and tenants who don't know their way around the court system should receive assistance. SLS is a great resource and it would be best if the representation was free to tenants.	8
	6. Do you believe that judges have discretion to award a tenant additional time to move? Why or Why not (+8)	I believe judges can allow additional time to tenants but that is determined on a case by case basis.	7
	7. Do you believe that judges have discretion to require landlord to accept a payment plan? Why or why not? (+8)	No, I don't believe a landlord can be force to accept a payment plan under the rules.	7
	8. Do you believe that judges have discretion to deny an eviction due to special circumstances? Why or why not? (+8)	I take an oath to follow the law, I must apply the law to the facts and evidence provided as it relates to evictions.	7
	9. Do you believe that judges should serve as mediators between tenants and landlords? Why or why not? (+8)	Judges can always encourage tenants and landlords possible resolve any issues they may before the matter is called if at all possible, however, the parties are not required to mediate their differences. The reason why many parties seek to take their issues to court is to have the judge provide them with a ruling bases on the facts presented and the evidence provided.	8
	10. Many of the tenants who are defendants in eviction proceedings in First City Court are lower-income residents and often earn wages hourly. Do you believe evictions proceedings should be upgraded to include after-hours hearings set on some evenings and weekends? (+8)	As your next First City Court judge, I will seek ways of making it convenient for parties to attend court hearings. It takes an average of an hour and a half for a person to travel from New Orleans East to downtown. That is why I would like to conduct hearings at satellite locations in areas such as New Orleans East and the lower Ninth Ward. As I am not familiar with the rules of Civil Service employees as it relates to overtime, this would need to be explored before I can comment, because these employees would have to be paid for any hours worked outside of their scheduled work hours.	8
	Interview/Forum (Max - 21 points)		19
	Total Score		91

Candidate	Question	Responses	Average Score
Robbins Graham	1. Briefly state your understanding of the evictions process in First City Court. What, if any, upgrades would you suggest to our evictions procedure? (+7)	There is a lease agreement between the tenant and landlord. A 5-day notice has to be provided from the landlord to the tenant, unless there is a waiver in the lease. If Sheriff serves a 5 day notice, they go to a 10-day answer and response excluding holidays and weekends. The lease is a contract and must comply with the law. Some upgrades include setting up a help desk, and requiring that leases have an addendum on it that explain the evictions process to the leasee, and ensuring that landlords have this process set forth in the lease.	7
	2. Do you believe that landlords should be required to store security deposits in a second account to combat the issue of landlords who illegally withhold security deposits? Why or Why not? (+8)	Yes, landlords should be required to store security deposits in a second account. This requirement helps to avoid situations where a tenant who is rightfully entitled to a refund of his or her deposit ends up being deprived of funds the tenant might need to relocate or for some other purpose. Requiring landlords to keep rental deposits in a second account facilitates fair housing practices and would be beneficial for both the landlord and the tenant.	8
	3. Do you think the City needs to build more affordable rental housing for very low-income residents in order to prevent evictions?	During these unprecedented times, it is unlikely that the City of New Orleans is fiscally able to build more housing. There are federally funded programs which assists low-income residents with housing costs, including the Section 8 Program and rent-controlled housing. Perhaps in the future when the economy is on better footing, some of the blighted property in New Orleans could be rehabilitated and put to use as housing for very low-income residents.	8
	4. Do you believe that a Tenant's Bill of Rights could help to create equity between landlords and tenants in the city? If so, what should it include, or not include? Please explain your answer.	Tenant's Bill of Rights could be beneficial to both tenants and landlords in that such a Bill would spell out rights and responsibilities on both sides of the rental agreement and perhaps help to avoid litigation. A few items which should be included in a Tenant's Bill of Rights would include: A uniform, designated amount for security deposits; specific limits on fees for background checks; clearly stated information regarding the procedure for returning of return of rental deposit after a tenant vacates the premises; information about the landlord's rights to enter and inspect the rental property during the lease period; and specifics regarding what amenities or services the landlord is required or not required to provide. A rental agreement often provides much of the same information, but tends to be more oriented to the landlord's rights.	8
	5. Do you believe that all tenants should have legal representation in eviction proceedings?	All tenants should have legal representation in eviction proceedings to allow for a fair playing field. In some instances, tenants might be intimidated by the court process or have difficulty understanding their rights or responsibilities as a tenant. Fortunately, in New Orleans pro bono legal assistance is available for tenants who can't afford to hire an attorney.	8
	6. Do you believe that judges have discretion to award a tenant additional time to move? Why or Why not (+8)	In some instances, the judge plays the role of a mediator and therefore, given a particular set of circumstances and in order to ensure fairness, might find it necessary to award a tenant more time to move.	7
	7. Do you believe that judges have discretion to require landlord to accept a payment plan? Why or why not? (+8)	The terms of payment are spelled out in a lease or rental agreement. Therefore, in ordinary times, a judge should not have to require a landlord to accept a payment plan. However, in times such as these, due to COVID 19, a judge might need to enact such a requirement, given the particular facts of each dispute.	7
	8. Do you believe that judges have discretion to deny an eviction due to special circumstances? Why or why not? (+8)	As stated above in my answer to question number seven, these are unusual times which might require special considerations for special circumstances. Even during more normal circumstances, a judge might need to deny an eviction as a matter of fairness and decency, based on the particulars of the case. A judge should strive for an outcome that is fair.	8
	9. Do you believe that judges should serve as mediators between tenants and landlords? Why or why not? (+8)	In most scenarios, when necessary to bring about closure that is fair and just, and as long as both parties understand the mediation process, a judge should try to mediate the case. For instance, in a case where the parties are on more equal footing as far as their understanding of the legal process, mediation might be appropriate. However, there might be situations where the facts and circumstances might require litigation.	8
	10. Many of the tenants who are defendants in eviction proceedings in First City Court are lower-income residents and often earn wages hourly. Do you believe evictions proceedings should be upgraded to include after-hours hearings set on some evenings and weekends? (+8)	That would be a great service to provide but given the logistics is probably not practical, particularly at this time, as such an upgrade would require coordinating several legal entities. If all entities could agree to help facilitate evening or weekend court, once or twice a month for instance, that would be a great for lower-income residents.	7
	Interview/Forum (Max - 21 points)		20
	Total Score		95

Candidate	Question	Responses	Average Score
Marissa Hutabrat	1. Briefly state your understanding of the evictions process in First City Court. What, if any, upgrades would you suggest to our evictions procedure? (+7)	Overview of the Evictions Process The eviction process in First City Court starts with an alleged violation or expiration of the lease. Next, is the posting of a five (5) day notice on the door of the premises. This notice is either posted by the landlord or by the Constable. After the expiration of the five (5) day notice (exclusive of holidays, weekends, and the first day the notice is posted), the landlord can go into the First City Court Clerk's Office and apply for a "Rule for Possession of Premises." Once the form for the Rule is correctly filled out, the clerk's office will set the rule for a date (usually two (2) weeks or so in the future). In the meantime, the Constable goes to the premises and posts a notice of the court date and Rule on the door. On the appointed date, the landlord and the tenant attend court where a hearing on the Rule is heard by the judge. The judge then evaluates the landlord's reason for requesting possession, hears any defenses the tenant may have, and makes a ruling based on the law and evidence presented. Once the judgment is signed, the tenant has twenty-four (24) hours to deliver the premises to the landlord or lessor. If the tenant does not deliver the premises, the landlord will have to go back to the clerk's office and constable's office to get a warrant that will be served by the Constable, forcing the tenant to deliver the premises. I would suggest that some additional information be provided to the tenant by the court. Additional information about the eviction process could be printed on the back of the constable's notice. That information could include contact information for resources to help tenants in their defense. Oftentimes the judge becomes a mediator. If I am elected, I would like to investigate if a mediator or hearing officer could be selected to help handle some of the issues that can be resolved before coming to the court.	7
	2. Do you believe that landlords should be required to store security deposits in a second account to combat the issue of landlords who illegally withhold security deposits? Why or Why not? (+8)	Storing security deposits in a separate account sounds like it could be a good idea, but it may not stop landlords from still not giving the deposit back in a timely manner. It may be a good idea to institute some sort of penalty that would help require landlords to return security deposits timely.	6
	3. Do you think the City needs to build more affordable rental housing for very low-income residents in order to prevent evictions?	It is important for all of the residents of New Orleans to have a safe and affordable place to live. A significant way to help prevent evictions would be additional affordable rental housing for low income residents.	7
	4. Do you believe that a Tenant's Bill of Rights could help to create equity between landlords and tenants in the city? If so, what should it include, or not include? Please explain your answer.	I believe that there should be more investment in educating tenant's about their rights when they have issues with their landlords. One way to address that may be to create a Tenant's Bill of Rights or some other type of tool to reinforce that tenant's also have rights in eviction cases	7
	5. Do you believe that all tenants should have legal representation in eviction proceedings?	The law does not currently require any party to have legal representation and if I am elected judge of First City Court, it will be my job to uphold the law. It is because tenants oftentimes do represent themselves that it is important to have a judge that not only has a solid understanding of the law, but also has the compassion to have all persons from all walks of life who come before the court feel respected and that their voices are being heard by a fair and impartial judge. If I am elected judge, I will also invest in educating people about the eviction process, which will help them defend themselves.	7
	6. Do you believe that judges have discretion to award a tenant additional time to move? Why or Why not (+8)	According to the law, once the eviction is granted, the judgment issued shall order the lessee or occupant to deliver possession of the premises to the lessor or owner. Additional time to move should be considered by the landlord depending on the particular circumstances of the case, but additional time can only be awarded to the tenant if the landlord agrees.	7
	7. Do you believe that judges have discretion to require landlord to accept a payment plan? Why or why not? (+8)	Judges have the discretion to suggest landlords accept a payment plan depending on the particular circumstances of the case. The law does not currently allow the judge to require a landlord accept a payment plan, and as a judge, it would be my job to review the facts and evidence presented and uphold the law.	7
	8. Do you believe that judges have discretion to deny an eviction due to special circumstances? Why or why not? (+8)	Depending on the particular circumstances a judge may deny an eviction. It is the responsibility of the judge to hear and evaluate the claims by the landlord, review the facts and evidence presented, and interpret the law. If the judge finds the lessor or owner is not entitled to the relief sought, a judge may deny the eviction.	7
	9. Do you believe that judges should serve as mediators between tenants and landlords? Why or why not? (+8)	Judges often serve as mediators between tenants and landlords due to the nature of the proceedings. Oftentimes both parties are unrepresented and the hearing on the Rule for Possession can often sound like a mediation. If the particular circumstances suggest that it would benefit the parties to mediate, that option should be available to the parties, but the judge should not necessarily be the facilitator of the mediation. If I am elected, I would like to investigate the legality of hiring a mediator to work in my courtroom or a hearing officer to help resolve evictions.	8
	10. Many of the tenants who are defendants in eviction proceedings in First City Court are lower-income residents and often earn wages hourly. Do you believe evictions proceedings should be upgraded to include after-hours hearings set on some evenings and weekends? (+8)	The First City Court performs a service in allowing citizens an opportunity to access justice. It is important to ensure litigants have meaningful and equal access to justice by having their day in court. I am committed to work tirelessly to serve the public and I pledge to do all I can as a judge to help facilitate this access to justice.	7
	Interview/Forum (Max - 21 points)		20
	Total Score		90

Candidate	Question	Responses	Average Score
Aylin Acikalin	1. Briefly state your understanding of the evictions process in First City Court. What, if any, upgrades would you suggest to our evictions procedure? (+7)	<p>Evictions are governed by a combination of state and federal statutes, local judicial rules, civil procedure, private contract, and judicial precedent, including but not limited to Title XI of the Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (P.L. 116-136), Section 4024, the Federal Fair Housing Amendment Act; e.g. Canal Realty &amp; Imp. Co. v. Pallet, 217 La. 376, 46 So. 2d 303 (1950) (Landlord's acceptance of June rent was waiver of May notice cancelling lease for tenant's alleged violation of conditions of lease and demanding possession was forgiveness of all previously committed infractions of lease and reinstated the lease, and eviction action without giving tenant ten days' notice of landlord's exercise of option to terminate contract for alleged violation of conditions of lease was premature); Dorsa v. Parent, 352 So. 2d 258, 259 (La. Ct. App. 1977) (acknowledging holding in Saxton v. Para Rubber Co. of Louisiana, 166 La. 308, 117 So. 235 (1928) that when a custom of payment has been followed by the parties to a contract for a substantial period of time, including late payments, and is acquiesced in by all of them, it has the effect of modifying the contract, and supplies the omission in the lease of fixing the place and method of payment); La. Code Civ. Code art. 2703 ("in the absence of contrary agreement, usage, or custom rent is due at the beginning of the term...at the address provided by the lessor...")</p> <p>The CARES Act created extensions for the payment of rent for certain properties due to covid-19. Recent attempts to change state law to make similar exceptions and also to change notice requirements have failed. See, e.g. H.B. 388 (Regular Session 2020). The impact of the waiver of notice to vacate, especially with regard to emergency situations, in La. Civ. Code art. 4701 should be studied. The most effective way to achieve a change in state law is to engage the Louisiana State Law Institute to make a recommendation to the legislature. <a href="http://www.lsi.org">www.lsi.org</a>.</p>	7
	2. Do you believe that landlords should be required to store security deposits in a second account to combat the issue of landlords who illegally withhold security deposits? Why or Why not? (+8)	<p>Lawyers are required to hold client's deposits in a segregated escrow account with strict accountability rules. The interest on those accounts is donated to legal aid. See La. St. Bar art. 16. It may be reasonable to consider requiring landlords to hold deposits in interest bearing accounts to benefit the courts, a mediation service or some other appropriate or related purpose</p>	7
	3. Do you think the City needs to build more affordable rental housing for very low-income residents in order to prevent evictions?	<p>According to the Data Center, New Orleans has nearly 40% of its children living below poverty with 58% of those children being raised by single mothers making less than \$17,000 per year. This is a well known fact among elected officials and policy makers. Much of New Orleans affordable and public housing was destroyed by flooding or by government decree and not replaced at the same rate. Simultaneously the wages of New Orleanians continues to be low, depending on an hourly work with little or no benefits. According to the Louisiana Workforce Commission the number 1 most populated job is cashier at \$20,000 per year. Recent studies have show the livable wage is \$64,000 per year. While necessary, building affordable housing will not prevent evictions because even section 8 landlords can evict tenants. Additionally, many of the affordable housing developments that are built on significant tax subsidies have a time limit on their affordability clauses that create their own set of problems such as landlords refusing to invest in the properties at the end of their affordable life cycle (see American Can Company). Permanent land trust are part of the solution, but until wages in the country become livable, including healthcare and retirement benefits, there will be a constant struggle for people to achieve affordable housing especially as large portions of the population age and we continue to see the impacts of global economic and environmental devastation. 4</p>	8
	4. Do you believe that a Tenant's Bill of Rights could help to create equity between landlords and tenants in the city? If so, what should it include, or not include? Please explain your answer.	<p>I'm not sure what you mean by a Tenant's Bill of Rights. If you mean that a Tenant's Bill of Rights would be codified into law, one way to create more balance of power would be to prohibit a landlord from denying rental if a tenant refuses a waiver of notice and that the lease include a provision that the landlord disclosed to the tenant that he/she/they had a right to refuse the waiver of notice; requiring the landlord to offer the option of mediation to resolve disputes and have a provision that the tenant accepted/rejected the option to mediate. Most industries and professions (e.g. doctors, lawyers, engineers) have rules of conduct combined with licensing requirements that establish a standard of professional conduct. It is traditionally been the state's responsibility to regulate the industry it grants the right and privilege of doing business to protect the public health, welfare and safety.</p>	7
	5. Do you believe that all tenants should have legal representation in eviction proceedings?	<p>Legal representation is ideal. The constitution only requires that legal representation be provided to criminal defendants. The unfortunate reality is that there are limited resources for legal aid in the City. In First City Court there is no jury. The judge decides the case based on the evidence presented. It is critical for a First City Court judge to have the experience of interacting with the public, patience to listen to unrepresented litigants, the ability to search for the truth, ask the right questions and ensure that law and rules are followed and exercise discretion where necessary and appropriate. I have that experience- having working most of my career in public service starting with providing constituent services in US Senator Mary Landrieu's office in Washington, DC, as a watchdog for the public as Legal Analyst for the Bureau of Governmental Research and as Legislative Director in the City Council District office- I have raised money for and donated to legal aid services and provide pro bono representation myself. I will do whatever I can to ensure that unrepresented litigants have every opportunity to seek representation and if they are unable to acquire it are able to have access to the help desk and staff to provide as much direction as legal allowable.</p>	7
	6. Do you believe that judges have discretion to award a tenant additional time to move? Why or Why not (+8)	<p>There may be certain circumstances based on the facts and circumstances of a specific case. The Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure art 2014 states that "a contract may not be dissolved when the obligor has rendered a substantial part of the performance and the part not rendered does not substantially impair the interest of the obligee." If the facts of the cases meet the standard of art 2014 for example, it may warrant that the contract of lease not be dissolved. The Court also has discretion to grant additional time for answer under La. Code of Civil Procedure art. 1001.</p>	7
	7. Do you believe that judges have discretion to require landlord to accept a payment plan? Why or why not? (+8)	<p>Judges have the ability to help parties come to an agreement that can be reduced to a consent or stipulated judgment that involves a payment plan.</p>	7
	8. Do you believe that judges have discretion to deny an eviction due to special circumstances? Why or why not? (+8)	<p>This question is vague and overbroad. Every case is dependent on its the facts and circumstances. The landlord has the burden of proof that the eviction meets the criteria of the law. If the tenant provides credible evidence that the eviction is unwarranted under the law, the eviction should be denied. It is within the discretion of the judge to determine the credibility of evidence</p>	7
	9. Do you believe that judges should serve as mediators between tenants and landlords? Why or why not? (+8)	<p>In any case, the parties can request a settlement conference with the judge. Both parties have to consent. This is a very common occurrence where a judge may facilitate settlement discussions. A judge in a settlement conference has to be very careful not to prejudice a case before evidence is presented. An elected judge cannot "mediate" a case as it is commonly understood. It could create an ethical conflict. See La. Code of Judicial Conduct Canon 3 and 5. Mediation is a term of art referring to an extrajudicial and non-binding process to attempt to resolve a conflict that requires both parties consent. If the parties request and consent to "mediation" it should be referred to an outside mediator (not the sitting judge).</p>	7
	10. Many of the tenants who are defendants in eviction proceedings in First City Court are lower-income residents and often earn wages hourly. Do you believe evictions proceedings should be upgraded to include after-hours hearings set on some evenings and weekends? (+8)	<p>I am open to proving options for working people to appear by video conference, after hours, during lunch periods, evening, or weekends. Any nonbusiness hours options would require a study of the impact on civil service rules, overtime, court budget, etc. In light of the changes we've seen during the pandemic, the most realistic option is to allow appearances by video conference. I am a working single mother, tech savvy myself and would welcome and encourage nontraditional methods for court appearances.</p>	7
	Interview/Forum (Max - 21 points)		18
	Total Score		89