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Referee to Make Second Judgeship Bid

By a MetNews Staff Writer

Los Angeles Superior Court Referee Randolph M. Hammock told the MetNews yesterday that he intends to make a second bid for election as a judge of the court next year.

In the June 2006 primary, Hammock ran as a “Consumer Law Attorney” and drew a “well qualified” rating from the County Bar, but finished sixth out of a field of seven candidates seeking the seat previously held by retired Judge Paula Mabrey, garnering only 8.59 percent of the vote.

Then-Deputy District Attorney David. W. Stuart won the subsequent run-off against Deputy City Attorney Janis Levart Barquist.

This time around, Hammock quipped that things will be different because he will hopefully win.

Becoming more serious, he explained that he “decided to pursue a judgeship by the more traditional means” of becoming a subordinate judicial officer and “then proceeding in a logical manner to that goal while gaining valuable judicial experience.”

Emphasizing that he was the only “private sector” candidate in the 2006 judicial race to earn a “well qualified” rating, Hammock said that since that time, “I believe that I have made myself a stronger and more qualified candidate....”

In addition he vowed to “spent whatever is needed to win,” although he said he doubted he would purchase a candidate statement again. Hammock added that he intends to have \$250,000 in his campaign coffers by the end of the year.

And, while Hammock had lagged behind his opponents in the last election in terms of securing endorsements, he said he was “anticipating receiving more support from the community” this time around, as well as “a multitude of endorsements from my judicial colleagues.”

He also said he has interviewed “a few” campaign consultants and plans to retain someone after Labor Day.

A Democrat, Hammock said he applied for a judicial appointment when Gray Davis was governor, but his bid never went anywhere because Davis was recalled not long after he turned in his application.

Hammock said he filed a second application in 2006, supplementing that application in February, but has not yet been invited to interview with the Commission on Judicial Nominees Evaluation.

The Baltimore native moved with his family to San Diego when he was 12. He graduated magna cum laude from San Diego State University in 1980 and then attended the University of San Diego Law School.

After being admitted to the State Bar in 1984, Hammock did insurance defense work in San Diego for two years before moving to Los Angeles and joining Chelski, Hammock & Hedges—which later became Hammock & Hedges.

In February 1996, Hammock became an independent contractor with the Law Offices of Richard M. Lester and in July 2007, he was appointed by Presiding Juvenile Court Judge Michael Nash as an as-needed referee.

His position was converted to a full-time one in 2008, but converted back to an as-needed one earlier this year. Hammock explained he is “a floater” with no regular assignment, but that he still sits most days of the week hearing cases in dependency, delinquency and informal traffic court.

Over the course of his career Hammock said he has done probate, family law, insurance bad faith, and civil rights litigation and has been admitted to practice in 15 states.

He claims over 60 jury trials to verdict under his belt, as well as stints as a judge pro tem in superior and municipal courts, and as a arbitrator and mediator for the Los Angeles Superior Court.

The attorney is also a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates—which says it limits its membership to the top 1 percent of trial lawyers in America—the Consumer Attorneys Association of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Bar Association, and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

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