



Connect with your Neighbors.....Change the World

2023 District Councilmember Questionnaire

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CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name: Janay Hawthorne

District: 9th District City Council

I have read the attached questionnaire responses and certify that the information provided is accurate and the opinions stated accurately reflect my own positions.

Candidate Signature: *Janay Hawthorne*

Date: 1/14/2023

District: 9th District City Council

Please complete the form inserting lines as needed to accommodate your answers,

then sign and return the form via email in Word format to:

info@phillynn.org and Gloria Gilman, gmgilman@gmail.com. Mail a copy with the signature page to

Gloria Gilman

121 S. Broad St., Suite 1710

Philadelphia, PA 19107

I. INTRODUCTION

In Section IV below, please answer as best you can. If you have not yet come to a final decision on an issue, or don't currently have enough information to provide an informed answer, please so state.

II. BACKGROUND

1. Tell us about your experience in leadership and administration. What policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.)

During my time at Johns Hopkins, I led a cohort of students that drafted policy memos addressing the systemic harms of private police forces. This advocacy project worked closely with the Maryland legislature and presented Senator William C. Smith with data outlining the harms of expanding private police forces like those at Johns Hopkins.

- Maryland senate bill SB0276, a bill that would repeal provisions relating to the establishment and maintenance of a Johns Hopkins Police Department. (Ari Davis adavis@csgv.org)

Testified during the Janus vs. AFSCME hearings to advocate for workers' rights and how a decision in favor of Janus would weaken unions. The power at play is an essential tool to balance the scales for women & people of color. As Political Director, Ethelind Baylor brought me in to testify on behalf of AFCSME DC47 workers.

In April 2021, Philadelphia City Council held hearings regarding remote work and its impact on productivity. I testified to advocate for more remote days as a shop steward and the benefits of the city implementing these days to avoid disability, help fill vacancies during an intense time and engage a population that feels disenfranchised from the workforce. The hearing concerned resolution 200521, and I was asked to testify by Jesse Jordan from AFCSME district council DC47

2. What differentiates you from other candidates?

Being a Public Health Data Specialist, Program Analyst, and Program Management Analyst governing over 50 million dollars of city budgets positions me uniquely to navigate our government. I know where efficiency is needed and how to navigate these spaces. Besides having a vested interest in being a lifelong resident of the 9th district, as a homeowner and parent, I'm dedicated for the long haul to its success. As a professor at Arcadia University, my passion for molding young minds and advocating and raising awareness around public health is a unique experience I bring to the 9th district and the city council.

3. With all the money that's being raised by other candidates, what's your path to victory in a crowded field?

Having strong relationships with unions in the city will be critical for anyone truly advocating for this city's residents. My experience testifying in support of local unions, strongly representing both in the streets and as a shop steward, and aggressively pushing for their support in this race as one of few candidates who has done so will lead me to victory. Unions won't be the only path forward. Whether that is putting me in the room to expand my call lists, having strong relationships with candidates and other elected officials, and dedicating time to the public to provide them hope is our path to financial viability. My organizational affiliations will also serve me well. From being a Penn State alumni, my network as a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and New Leaders Council (NLC) gives me a strong backing to propel my campaign forward.

4. Where do you stand on Term Limits and Councilmanic Prerogative?

While there have been some benefits, such as preventing gentrification across the city and specifically within the 9th district, Councilmanic Prerogative, if not checked, can be abusive. The guise of private interest should be removed from the process while maintaining some balance deferential on minor issues that the district may be privy to more than others. Residents need to know and believe they are a part of the process. The fact is, one of the leading causes of corruption in Philly is due to Councilmanic Prerogative.

Term limits benefit all residents across the city. The goal is always whether an elected official effectively serves the people in the right light. I would support more research in this area to properly assess our leaders' length of service and effectiveness and propose limits based on those metrics.

III. PRIORITIES

1. What, in your opinion are the greatest challenges facing your district and its residents?

Equitable and affordable housing is one of the most pressing issues for residents in the 9th district. Whether you're an aspiring homeowner or facing rising rent prices during a historical period of inflation, everyone is feeling the squeeze. Combined with a large segment of the population dealing with tangled titles and a high crime rate, these are the issues concerning most residents within the 9th district.

2. What three things would you most want to accomplish to address your district's challenges?

Making the office accessible to its residents is top priority. By educating constituents on navigating the confusing process in city hall, we can collectively overcome obstacles such as tangled titles and bring trust back to our system. When it comes to equitable and quality housing, our community has a large population of potential homeowners. Our goal is to bring programs directly to the community that incentivizes long term investment within the district while exploring rent control. Residents shouldn't face the burden of a housing market that focuses on greed.

When it comes to violence in our communities, the primary goal should be intervention and resources. Public health data literacy is a unique element I bring as a candidate for public safety. As mentioned previously, my background in this arena positions me with the expertise to bring those resources to how we address crime. Resourcing our communities with intervention tactics, bolstering community groups & programs that focus on de-escalation, and focusing on skill building with residents are key drivers to the crime rate. We know poverty is the root of crime in our communities. We can make our neighborhoods safer and help residents reach their full potential by addressing that.

IV. ISSUES

A. Housing

1. What would you do to change the trajectory of the housing crisis in your district? What agency or program would you start with and why?

Tangled titles and affordable housing are the key drivers within the district related to the housing crisis. Educating our community and bringing access directly to them makes housing more accessible. There are federal programs that encourage cities to take innovative action, such as purchasing vacated properties in the wake of the pandemic and converting them into affordable housing units.

2. How do you plan to help keep long-time homeowners from being forced out of their homes?

PA homeowners assistance program truly helps residents by expanding income limits and allowing residents to receive mortgage assistance and grants that lead to property retention. The focus of my office would be program accessibility, bringing them to the residents rather than leaving them to find them on their own. We know neighborhoods flourish when home ownership is higher. By educating and making this a priority in my office, the 9th district has a better chance for long-term success.

3. Do you support Good Cause and/ or Rent Control legislation? If not, what do you offer as an alternative?

Equitable housing is the name of the game. I'm for legislation addressing inflation and price gouging in the housing market.

4. Would you support legislation to enact zoning requirements to compel inclusion of affordable units in market rate developments, with "affordable" defined as no more than 40 % of the average household income in the ward?

Yes.

5. Would you require the land bank to prioritize the disposition of properties to favor low-income and cooperatively owned developments, including land trusts?

Yes.

B. Education

1. The Phila School District continues to lose public schools. How can we change that?

My goal is to stop the expansion of charter schools. We need to focus our efforts on all schools providing quality education. I would support legislation that limits the number of charter schools.

2. What do you think of legislation to regulate charter schools? How would you regulate them?

As a whole, charter schools are not effectively serving our communities. Regulation is needed to ensure charter schools adequately prepare the next generation to enter the workforce or further their education.

3. How would you increase community participation in School Board appointments?

I'm for having the majority of the school board move to an election process rather than appointments.

4. Would you compute the cost/benefit ratio for the School District of all proposed Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ) before they're approved by Council?

Yes.

C. Criminal Justice

1. How will you reduce gun violence in your district?

Right now, many of our residents result to gun violence as a means to resolving conflict. There are examples in cities like NYC where programs are funded and resources with public health data to target critical zones. The focus is equipping our community with de-escalation tactics and deploying violence intervention mediators to combat and prevent community disturbances.

2. How do we orient the police to service instead of enforcement?

No matter where you sit, everyone can agree the police are too frequently used to deal with community problems. We need to shift the culture within the police department and our communities to step away from relying on them for solutions to everything. The 35th and 14th police districts are prime examples of the importance of having police engage through community meetings with local organizations and serving civically in ways that are deeper than enforcement.

3. What ideas do you have for reintegrating formerly incarcerated citizens?

Education should be a primary focus while citizens are incarcerated. Incarceration can be isolating, and when citizens return, they are largely left to their own devices, which increases the likelihood of recidivism. I would support having formerly incarcerated citizens paired with a job navigator to make re-entry seamless and assist with reintegration.

4. How do we keep employers from denying jobs to qualified ex-offenders?

Employers should not be asking for the criminal history of non-violent offenders. I also support having criminal records expunged after residents have served their time and paid restitution.

D. Environmental Justice

1. Would you support construction of an environmentally damaging facility such as a trash to steam plant in your district if it would bring hundreds of jobs?

No.

2. What will you do to support and promote the use of solar and other renewable energy sources in your District?

This ties directly to programs that can help homeowners keep and maintain their properties. With education and accessibility at the forefront, we can promote renewable energy resources while maintaining homeownership levels within the district.

E. Economic Development

1. What do you think of imposing an impact fee on businesses failing to pay workers \$15/hr to reimburse the City for the costs of relieving poverty?

\$15/hr is long overdue to have a fighting chance in this economy. However, within proposing this impact fee, we must also ensure other costs and fees aren't spread to the consumer to offset the revenue businesses may face.

2. Would you fund the Philadelphia Public Financing Authority that was created by Council to lay the groundwork for a City Public Bank?

Yes.

3. What do you think of legislation to bar or limit privatization of City property and assets, such as the PGW?

Privatization is only effective if they are incentivized to act within the public interests. Otherwise, this could be harmful to the residents causing massive price hikes and service issues.

4. The Board of the PIDC, the City's main economic development funding agency, is made up of members appointed by the Chamber of Commerce. Would you change that? How?

Yes. I would support having some members appointed by the mayor and voted on by the city council.

5. Would you require the City to withdraw subsidies from large corporations that fail to provide jobs or other benefits to City residents?

Yes

F. Taxes

1. Which taxes would you propose raising to fund programs that cannot be paid for under the existing tax structure?

I would increase the tax contribution of those with higher incomes so everyone is paying their fair share.

2. What do you think of allowing a cap to be set on the number of property tax abatements granted in your District?

I would support a cap. This is lost funding that could improve the quality of life within the city.

V. GENERAL STATEMENT

Use this space to provide any further information that you would like us to consider about your candidacy, not covered by the questions above.

Philadelphia is on the verge of having a new political direction for the next four or maybe eight years. What we need less of is political grandstanding and more leaders working on policy to address the systemic issues that have been in place for far too long. As a resident, I'm ashamed to say we are the poorest big city in the country. I would hope the same is said for our elected officials and business leaders, but that's not always the case. That should be a badge of honor that displays the grit of our city. It should be the firestarter that inspires change, a new direction and leadership. My campaign is about bringing in a new wave of professionals with the experience and knowledge to tackle this city's long standing issues.