

Detroit City Council Candidate Questionnaire

August 4, 2009 Primary Election

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Employer: Novatech Computer Services, Inc. and H & P Protective Services, Inc.
Occupation: Business Owner
How long: 20 years for Novatech, 5 years for H & P
High School Diploma? Y School? Univ of Detroit High Year? 1981
College Degree? BS – Computer Science School? Austin Peay State Univ Year? 1985
Advanced Degree: MBA-Finance School? Wayne State Univ. Year? 1989

Please list any previous public office to which you have been elected or appointed, beginning with the most recent.

1. Explain, in 50 words or fewer, why you are seeking a seat on the Detroit City Council

Born and raised in Detroit I have always believed that this city has the potential to again be the destination for people of all races. At this time in our history I believe my educational background and business experience are what Detroit needs to move forward.

2. Describe any professional, educational or civic experience that has prepared you to play a constructive role on the city council.

I am a 20 year business owner. Novatech Computer Services, Inc. does software training, website design, consulting and networking. My other company is H & P Protective Services, a security guard service provider. Many of the functions that the council performs on a daily basis are some of the same tasks that I perform as a business owner: oversee budgets, meet with vendors to approve (or not approve) contracts, set policy for the company, oversee company departments, provide service to my customers, etc. I am also involved in my community organization, a long-time trustee at my church, co-founder of a male mentoring group, coach of my son's baseball and soccer teams and I sit on non-profit boards. Detroit needs new ideas and leaders that have a fresh vision for the direction of our city. We need to improve our technological infrastructure. My experience in this field will provide direction on this. We need to become more small business friendly, small businesses are the backbone of every city. As a small business owner I will advocate for more efficient processes to assist companies that want to do business in Detroit and entrepreneurs with new,

innovative ideas. We also need sound judgment when developing a budget for the city. My MBA in Finance has provided me with the educational background to assess and evaluate our financial position.

3. What do you anticipate spending on your campaign? How much have you collected so far? How many people have contributed?

We have a budget of \$300,000. Thus far we have collected around \$40,000. Over 200 people have contributed.

4. Please list what you consider to be the three most important core functions of city government?

The provision of cost effective, efficient public services encompasses the most important core functions of city government. Three of those services are: public safety, health and education.

5. Please identify three governmental departments or functions you would be willing to eliminate.

Before a determination is made to eliminate any city 'department' an extensive and expeditious evaluation must be completed. The most efficient departments which function to provide or oversee the most essential services must survive. Some departments may be merged, reorganized with highly competent new leadership or otherwise transformed. The elimination of any department will come only after a careful assessment of the needs of Detroit citizens for those services. Where the need is high, I will assure the continuance of such services even if they are delivered under the auspices of another department

6. What changes in staffing, compensation, benefits or work rules do you believe will be required to assure Detroit's continued solvency.

I do not presume that any particular changes in staffing, compensation, benefits, or work rules will 'assure Detroit's continued solvency.' However, to the extent some reasonable changes are necessary to assist in stabilizing the fiscal condition of the city, or to prevent future financial crisis, specific changes related to specifically identified needs will be determined and implemented in an fair manner with advice from paid and volunteer experts available to me.

7. With money available to tear down only 3,000 – 5,000 a year, how would you speed up the demolition of the estimated 80,000 abandoned homes and buildings in Detroit?

I would lobby that a proper use of the stimulus package from the Federal government be used for the tear down of abandoned homes and buildings. These are "shovel ready" projects that provide numerous jobs for our citizens.

8. Detroit's dwindling population is distributed over a geographical area many times the size of other cities. Do you support efforts to concentrate residents in a smaller portion of the city? If so, how would you facilitate this, and what short- and long-term uses would you envision for vacated neighborhoods.

I believe that we can efficiently "shrink" the city if a well thought out long term plan is instituted as soon as possible. With the closing of many schools and the revamping of others there should be a master plan that involves renewing the area around the surviving schools. New, sustainable communities should be developed with a mix of housing choices, grocery stores, bakeries and other small businesses needed in the community that can be easily accessed by the people within these communities. These communities (or villages) could be spread throughout the city with downtown being the central area. In between the communities can be green space with parks, urban farms, etc. By moving our population closer together we can more efficiently provide city services as well as promote a friendlier atmosphere to attract new families.

I do not support the practice of "imminent domain". I believe that everyone must be brought to the table and have input on how we can achieve this goal.

9. Do you support the agreement the Cockrel Administration negotiated to transfer the ownership and operation of Cobo Hall to a regional authority? If not, how would you propose to finance the expansion and operation of a convention center that costs Detroit \$20 million annually to support?

I support a regional authority overseeing Cobo Hall, but I do not support transfer of ownership of Cobo Hall to the authority. First, an appraisal of the property and building should be performed to determine its worth. After this is complete Detroit should lease Cobo Center for a fair amount per year to the authority for some specified period of time. Also, I would negotiate for an expansion that would result in Cobo Hall providing at least 1 million square feet of convention space. Many large conventions require this much space to consider having an event in the center.

10. How important is it to you to improve relations between the city of Detroit and the rest of the metropolitan region?

X Highest priority ___ Somewhat important ___ It matters but not critically to the city ___ not very ___ not at all

As a clarifier it is very important to me that relations between the City of Detroit and the rest of the metropolitan region reach and be maintained at a very high quality level. However, the highest priority of a council member must be related to the core functions of Detroit city government.

11. How can the city provide better bus service?

City bus service can be improved with an effective combination of rescheduling, rerouting, and periodic police department monitoring. Some

bus transfer points must be established where buses operating with few passengers will meet and passengers transferred to fill a bus traveling to a common location

12. Which, if any of the city's assets should be put up for sale to raise revenues or reduce expenses? How would you evaluate proposals to sell any such asset?

I do not believe that we should sell the city's assets to raise money. The sale of any city asset should be discouraged. Only after all other options have been explored should such a sale even be considered. Then, a traditional business assessment of any proposal to sell an asset should be made. Such assessment must include the actual value of the asset, the intrinsic value the asset is to city, the long term consequence of selling the asset.

13. Is it a good idea for the city to raise money by selling for an up-front cash payment its revenue from such sources as public parking or Detroit-Windsor tunnel tolls?

I do not believe it is a good idea to raise money by selling its anticipated future revenue for up-front cash.