

Detroit City Council Candidate Questionnaire – Detroit Free Press

Raphael B. Johnson

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Total Package Lifestyle, LLC

Professional Speaker, Author

5 years

High School Diploma – Cass Tech – 1993

College degree – B.A. Legal Admin. (University of Detroit Mercy – 2007)

Advanced degree – M.A. Liberal Studies (University of Detroit Mercy – 2008)

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

To be a voice of reason and tranquility. To be a City statesman and exhibit diplomacy in those critical areas that effects the People of Detroit. To be a “posterboy” for change, inspiration and hope. Restore pride back in Detroiters and those who invest in this City.

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

National motivational speaker and facilitator of Conflict Resolution Education Professional Development. Consultant for the *Maury Show* to effectuate a change in the lives of trouble teens and adults. Winner of Steve Harvey’s national Best Community Leader Award (Hoodies 2008), Worked two years with Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit as a Community Reintegration Coordinator. Two (2) recent college degrees (noted above). The following certifications:

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| 1. How to Supervise People, Fred Pryor Seminars | Ann Arbor, MI | 2008 |
| 2. National Transitional Jobs Network Training | Oakland, CA | 2008 |
| 3. Employment Retention, Goodwill Ind. of Detroit | Detroit, MI | 2007 |
| 4. Health & Wellness Training, Goodwill Ind. of Detroit | Detroit, MI | 2007 |
| 5. Code of Ethics, Whistleblowers Protection Act | Detroit, MI | 2007 |
| 6. Conflict of Interest, Goodwill Ind. of Detroit | Detroit, MI | 2007 |
| 7. Culturally Inclusive Workplace Training | Detroit, MI | 2007 |
| 8. Workplace Violence and Prevention Training | Detroit, MI | 2007 |
| 9. Recipient Rights Training, Wayne County Mental Health | Detroit, MI | 2007 |

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

We're looking at spending between \$75,000.00 - \$100,000.00. We've collected roughly \$10,000 so far. Approximately 75-100 people have contributed to date.

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

Public Safety Program (Police, Fire, EMT), **Creation of Jobs** (Contracts, regional cooperation, etc.) and **Balance Budget** (tax base, restructure government and downsize)

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

I would have to first study the budget and evaluate what role the 2/3 of departments (that are not mandated by City Charter) play in the essential services. Relocating and downsizing may be needed in order to operate City government. (at least until we can re-populate the city and attract more businesses).

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

With only 830,000 people, Detroit still have the government, infrastructure and land mass of 2 million people. Again, downsizing and consolidation of programs/departments may be needed in order to operate city government and assure its solvency.

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?

Owners must be responsible for these abandoned dwellings and for the cost that the City bears in maintaining them, fighting fires and demolition. In the event that the owners are reluctant to take on their responsibilities, I would push for a property transfer to the community/or residential use for the homeless and assist them in getting the property up to code. (only if the property can be rehabbed). Many of the low-income, displaced and homeless citizens could benefit from this. The city could also increase its residency.

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 to 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?

Yes, I support the above resident relocation initiative. More than likely the City would have to exercise eminent domain and "buy out" the sole residents on a particular block. It costs the city much more money to maintain the street than it would to buy the residents out. We would

encourage farmers and developers to lease or buy the vacant land for green and energy concentrated programs/businesses.

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?

Yes I do support regionalism only to the extent that Detroit maintains ownership. A Regional Authority would control Cobo yet it will still be controlled by Detroit. Detroit must embrace regionalism especially during these economically strapped times. Regionalism will become the world order for the tri-county area.

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

HIGHEST PRIORITY

11. How can the city provide better bus service?

We must regionalize transportation to serve all the tri-county area. This is imperative as the tri-county seeks to attract more tech businesses in the region.

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 such asset?

I would first have to see what funds are being generated and what significant role they play in Detroit continuously taking a loss. We would then evaluate the asset and ascertain (based on facts and numbers) whether would be advantageous for the City to keep it or sale it.

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

I am willing to review the entire budget. I would like to see transparency. Everything needs to come on the table to be evaluated for the generation of funds (ie., loss or gain) and considered for the best interest of the city.

Respectfully Submitted,

