

Black Lives Matter B-town

Democratic Primary 2019 Questionnaire Responses

Thank you for your interest in our questionnaire! BLM B-town's Political Outreach and Accountability committee crafted eight questions we hope will raise public awareness about how the policies and positions of current primary candidates for City Council, the Mayor's Office, and the Clerk's Office will affect the lives and well-being of people of color in our community. The questions and their responses can be read below. Please see our navigational instructions for a quick explanation of how to read this document.

Navigation:

Please use ctrl+f or command+f to search for respondents. The candidates and elected official who answered our questionnaire are

- Chris Sturbaum, City Council District 1
- Kate Rosenbarger, City Council District 1
- Denise Valkyrie, City Council District 1
- Daniel Bingham, City Council District 2
- Dorothy Granger, City Council District 2
- Ron Smith, City Council District 3
- David Rollo, City Council District 4
- Miah Michaelson, City Council District 4
- Isabel Piedmont-Smith, City Council District 5
- Jean Capler, City Council At-Large
- Matt Flaherty, City Council At-Large
- Andy Ruff, City Council At-Large
- Nicole Bolden, City Clerk Candidate
- John Hamilton, Mayoral Candidate
- Vauhxx Booker, City Council At-Large
- Jim Sims, City Council At-Large

Answers may be in a different order; please use ctrl+f or command+f.

Questionnaire:

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire

Please copy and paste. Please complete all 8 questions and send back to blacklivesmatterbtown@gmail.com

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher

housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?
 - *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."*
<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>
3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?
4. **City Council only:** In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?
5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.
6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?
7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?
8. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

Andy Ruff

City Council At-Large

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I don't agree that there is a city government mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue. Also, I don't know what is meant by "density housing". I strongly support programs to increase affordability and access to high-quality housing for lower-income and all people with disadvantaged access to housing. I support many of the affordable housing initiatives of the current City Administration - one that has done a tremendous amount to support and create affordable housing opportunities in the community.

Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

The information I have is what has been shared with the community by concerned, engaged groups and organizations like for example the City's Commission on the Status of Black Males. I don't have special knowledge beyond what has been shared by community groups. Having been a high school teacher in Indianapolis, I do not understand how removing students from the school environment can do anything but increase the chances that such students will engage in activities and behaviors that are more likely to lead to engagement with the criminal justice system. Recently, the MCCSC hired Rafi Hasan, former Safe and Civil City Director for the City of Bloomington, as the equity and inclusion coordinator to work on issues of diversity and equality in the MCCSC. I understand that one of his responsibilities is coordinating professional development for teachers and will be involved with ongoing efforts such as evaluating curriculum for cultural bias. I have great respect for Mr. Hasan and his work and stand ready to work with him in his efforts and will support ideas he has to partner the City with MCCSC to further community goals to eliminate racial bias anywhere it exists in community.

According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."

(<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)

How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

I agree with the dictionary definition that privilege is a special advantage granted to a particular person or group. As an elected official I have always made decisions based fundamentally on increasing social and economic equity, and I have a very long record of supporting and introducing policies through legislation that increase equity and opportunity for disadvantaged and marginalized communities. If elected I will continue forward with that same priority. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy? In working through three Administrations in my Council terms, I have always strongly, openly, loudly opposed Administration policies that I believe are counter to the overall best interest interest of the community. If elected I will continue to do this, since I do believe that one of the Council's primary duties is to act as a check and balance on the Administration.

To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

There are many efforts to make the criminal justice system more equitable and impartial. The Indiana Supreme Court is pushing counties to adopt the Pre-trial Release project. Monroe County is a pilot county. The idea behind this is to rely much less on cash bail and instead use risk assessment as a basis to release someone pre-trial. Other things that are happening are pre-arrest diversion programs that are being initiated. BPD for many years has been doing CIT deferrals on those suffering from mental illness. The DRO program assists those experiencing homelessness, addiction and mental health issues with services and treatment instead of arrest. BPD is working on bringing a crisis diversion center to Bloomington along with setting up a Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program to divert those who could be arrested for a crime into treatment as an alternative.

The city council took steps to protect against the militarization of our police by confirming there was significant training in de-escalation and implicit bias. We also made sure there was threat matrix that had to be used before the deployment of the armored rescue vehicle. There is data that is being collected and shared on public dashboards on the vehicle's use and the Board of Safety receives monthly reports on it's use. These are all steps in ensuring against the improper use of and future possibilities of militarizing our police.

Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

Establishing a 311 system to address crisis situations is another opportunity we have but we must make sure that however it is set up that the people responding are safe and have the appropriate training to be able to handle the situation. We don't want to create a situation where we now have more people at risk by not assuring those responding are trained and capable of handling the situation. I'm open to exploring this as long as we don't create a situation where public safety will have to respond to a now bigger issue.

Those who make false reports should be dealt with by those responsible for upholding and enforcing the laws.

Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

This would be a society that has completely embraced restorative justice and rejected punitive justice. It would be very different from our current situation in the US. Since victims and offenders would be integrated into virtually all aspects of society as part of the work of restorative justice, I believe the conditions and forces that generate much of the problems in crime and in our criminal justice system would be dramatically altered and ultimately reduced as a result.

What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

I agree with the common definition - Restorative justice is an approach to justice that focuses on the needs of victims and offenders, instead of the need to satisfy the rules of law or the need of the community to give out punishments. As the criminal justice system is outside of the purview of City Government, I don't know of programs that the Council would be in a position to be involved in, though I would encourage the use of the Council meetings and the Council Chambers as a community forum to educate, inform, and promote ideas and initiatives for needed changes to our criminal justice system.

Chris Sturbaum
City Council District 1

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

I am a strong advocate for homeownership which is a goal of many and a way to gain familial equity. Replacing existing older houses with new apartments removes an opportunity to buy existing and more affordable housing needing work. I also support the city working with Habitat to help provide the opportunity for people to attain homeownership. I have supported other projects like the B Line Habitat build and the Crescent Bend affordable housing project. I think ownership is the best way for all who can achieve it and I support the city's programs to help with homeowner assistance and downpayment assistance, although I would support making this more effective.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

The BUEA gives school grants and would consider a proposal from a school for such a program. Perhaps BLM could approach the school system with such a proposal along with this funding source idea after checking with the city in advance.

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3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

My father was the first in his family to go to college due to the GI Bill. I don't know how equitably the GI bill was distributed but I am aware of the racism in the military in WW II so I would think that it may have limited those opportunities as well. My grandfather worked as a dock worker in Cleveland and he left my father money when he died that helped me buy an old house on the west side and fix it up from what had been a house with a space heater and a rusted shower. This modest inherited family wealth is still a privilege and I understand that homeownership and family accumulated wealth was much more difficult for people of color. I went to school on a football scholarship and graduated but chose to start a small company repairing and eventually restoring housing.

It is a working class income and I helped my wife go to Ivy Tech and she worked so we had two incomes. I have worked hard but I know it would have been harder to be accepted in the community as a person of color when I offered to work on people's houses and when I later ran for election.

4. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy? *I have never been shy about disagreeing when I don't think something is right. At this moment I am opposing zoning that will encourage the demolition of housing that is naturally affordable to replace it with new multifamily housing that will be much more expensive. I recognize that class issues and class struggles are often similar and include racial equity. The unintended consequences of adding density for young working millennials is that naturally occurring affordable housing is displaced and the chance to become a homeowner (which I wish for all who can achieve it) is made more difficult as potential owners compete with investors who are better connected and can always pay more.*

5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it. *The national climate of racial tension and the media immediacy of actions that take place in other states and cities becomes part of our local rational and emotional climate and can influence people's reactions to one another in negative ways. Regarding the CIRT Vehicle, I remember when Mayor Krusan had an opportunity to acquire a similar vehical that was literally war surplus from Afganistan. It was so military in appearance that we concurred in the decision to not take advantage of the cost savings. However that demonstrates the percieved long term need for such a vehical for use in certain circumstances. School shootings come immediately to mind. The example given to CMs after the purchase had been made (without consulting us), was a shooter who had shot his female companion and was in the woods ready to shoot anyone who approached the house to give aid to the injured partner. By the time another county's armored vehical arrived, the woman had bled to death. I think the national social climate made this issue a flash point for existing local fear and resentment against the police. I have served on the city council with Mike Diekoff and I know this propelled a serious assessment and a sincere effort to train officers in social awareness and other state of the art equity training.*

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice? *I know that the police have done a lot of training in this*

area. I am not well versed in this area but the 311 number sounds like a good idea. In practice, I would expect that the 311 might be part of the dispatch team and work closely with emergency personnel including the police. As to individuals who make racially biased false reporting to police, I would expect that there is a law against false reporting already that could be applied.

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

I would imagine that in place of prisons there would be compulsory schools with opportunities for learning skills both technical and social, so that functioning in society becomes a real opportunity and possibility. The society would have to be fair to all and minimal housing, food and health care would be a right for all. There are always going to be people with more and with less and individual initiative will and should be rewarded. There must be fair and equal opportunities for upward mobility in a society. When that doesn't exist we have a system that breeds resentment and anger and unlawful behavior. I happen to believe that there will always be a need for some alternative to prisons for people who break the law.

8) What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

CJAM is a program that does work in this area. Monroe County's trial diversion program is a good idea. I have heard of good results from the drug court too. City Council doesn't often get involved in this area of government but I am interested in learning how we could be of assistance. Minor charges can pull someone into the system causing financial hardship and criminal records when the alternatives to sentencing might have a more positive effect from being treated with fairness and understanding instead of punishment.

Thank-you for the opportunity for dialog that this provides,

*Chris Sturbaum
District One
812-340-0724*

Daniel Bingham
City Council District 2

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1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

I do support density. We need to allow ADUs and multiplexes in existing neighborhoods to create a broader range of housing and make space for people often priced out of them. I broadly support the UDO's approach to this, but I would pursue tweaking it so that multiplexes weren't allowed on corner lots, but rather were allowed on lots that already had buildings of a certain size. This would discourage wholesale demolition and replacement of existing houses, and encourage reuse of existing structures. I would propose allowing duplexes for lots with houses that were at least 1600 square feet, triplexes for houses that were at least 2400 square feet, and quadplexes for those that were at least 3200 square feet.

We also need to allow certain areas of Bloomington to urbanize. I would look to encourage urbanization of the Walnut/College corridor extending north and south of downtown for several miles. I would also work to encourage the replacement of the College Mall area and Whitehall plaza areas with dense, walkable urban development. I think we can do this partly through zoning and the UDO. My ideal would be a code that required retail on the ground floor, offices on the second floor and then three to five floors of housing above. The current UDO's density bonusing system is a good start. I would expand it, allowing a few more floors for more affordability. I would also strengthen the sustainability requirements.

Beyond density, I think we should look to establish and encourage independent, community run institutions that can provide permanent affordable housing. Housing Cooperatives and Community Land Trusts would be two such institutions. Housing cooperatives can be rental or equity cooperatives. They are democratically run by their members. Because of this, as long as the cooperative survives, the housing will remain affordable.

We have one housing cooperative already in town, Bloomington Cooperative Living, which is a rental cooperative. Right now, its members are about half students and half young working professionals, because it just provides communal housing. However, that organization wants to expand and provide a greater variety of housing types in order to better serve families and seniors. The primary barrier is financing, which the city could help with.

We should work to help BCL grow by providing financing, and work to encourage other housing cooperatives to start up and get established by providing both financing and education, training, and support. If we can get enough rental cooperatives established and in control of a large enough segment of the rental market, it's possible they could drive down overall rent by undercutting the for profit landlords.

We should also work to establish Community Land Trusts. Community Land Trusts are different from cooperatives in that they allow for traditional home ownership. A Community Land Trust holds housing affordable by owning the land on which housing sits and granting a lifetime

ground lease to the homeowner. Because the land trust owns the land, it can place covenants on the home limiting the rate at which it can raise in value and thus holding it affordable for the homeowner. The homeowner can get a mortgage like normal, build equity like normal, and sell the property like normal - with the one exception being that the land trust limits just how much the value of the house can appreciate to ensure it remains affordable for the next person.

Community Land Trusts, in particular, have been used to prevent displacement in gentrifying neighborhoods. Because they limit the degree to which property can appreciate, they keep property values from spiking, allowing people to stay in their houses. They can stabilize neighborhoods and keep people in place who might otherwise be forced out.

I think we should explore establishing one or more Community Land Trusts with a mission to prevent gentrification in our currently affordable neighborhoods and to create affordability in our already gentrified neighborhoods.

One approach to establishing a Community Land Trust very quickly might be to work with Habitat for Humanity to see if they would be willing to place their properties in a land trust.

As we're establishing these organizations, we should make sure there's representation on their boards of marginalized community members.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

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I don't have much knowledge of the data around this. I know the rates are absurdly high, and I know that it absolutely plays into a school to prison pipeline. I know placing police officers in schools can make it considerably worse. I would absolutely support an anti-bias initiative focused on MCCSC. I don't know if we have police officers in our schools, but I would support removing them. I am, more generally, against expulsion and suspension as disciplinary measures in our education system - they are completely counter productive.

I'm not sure how much power the city council has in this case, but I would be willing to explore the issue and see what the council could do.

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

I'm not totally sure how to define privilege - I suppose I could grab an internet definition, but that feels disingenuous. It might be described as the absence of certain oppressions. It's often used in the context where the absence of experience with certain oppressions leads one to question whether they exist.

I know it's the water I swim in. I'm white, male, cis, straight, and I come from an upper middle class family. As such, when issues of identity based oppression and marginalization come up, my default is to listen and leave space. I know my instincts can lead me astray here, because I cannot truly empathize, only sympathize. My natural inclination is to subject all new ideas to a trial by fire and adopt the ones that survive, but that really doesn't work in this context. It took me a while to figure that out and I still have a lot to learn. So I default to listening and doing my best to silence my inner critic.

As an engaged community member, I've done my best to be supportive. I showed up to speak and wrote against the Bearcat. When issues were raised in Bloomington Cooperative Living during my term as Board President, I did my best to be supportive, eventually working with the board to pull the conflict into mediation with mediators who had some experience with the oppressions at issue. I won't say we were fully successful in resolving that conflict, we weren't. It fizzled more than anything else. Even though I'm not entirely sure just how we could have done better - yet - I know that we could have, and admitting that feels important.

If I'm elected, I'll do my best to listen and to create space - using what power and voice I have to actively (not just passively) create that space when needed. I'll also always try to keep oppressions and marginalizations in mind, and try to make sure that any policy I push for at the very least isn't exacerbating them and at best is working to ameliorate them. As previously mentioned, with the privilege I have, I might need some help spotting where the problems are. Where there are people willing to lend a hand spotting said problems, I would actively seek that help.

And, in four years, I would be eager to step down and endorse someone ready and willing to carry the torch for climate action and a democratic economy who is more in need of voice and power than myself. I'm not looking to have a multi-term run, just to make sure we do our part on climate and do what I can to move us towards a more just and equitable economy. And while I'm there, use what power and voice I have to support those who need the support.

4. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a

policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?

Well, for one thing, I would work to make city council a more co-equal body of government. I think we should be paying councilors a living wage and requiring that city council be their full time job. It's very hard for part time councilors, who must maintain other full time jobs to support themselves or their families, to keep up with the work of council. Just the very fact that they are part time leaves them dependent on city staff for research on the issues much of the time (or struggling to find the time to perform independent research), which leaves them at the mercy of the mayor's administration.

Making the council part time and not paying them a full time living wage also makes it unavailable to many low income people, who are already working multiple part time or full time jobs just to support themselves. If we were to make it a full time, living wage job, that would make it possible for low income people to run and hold the job in a way that it just isn't right now.

Ideally, I think the way to do this is to pass an ordinance that changes the nature of the job and the salary for the *next* term, not the current term. That way the current council avoids the issue of raising their own salary - they'd have to be re-elected before seeing the raise.

Beyond that, if the Mayor's office attempts to implement policy that is harmful to people of color, then I think there are any number of ways the council could prevent it - from limiting the budget to passing ordinances. It's hard to know ahead of time without being able to get into the specifics of the code and the issue at hand, but as a software engineer I have a great deal of experience in thinking within these sorts of constraints and engaging in creative problem solving to work around them. I think, in most cases, I'd be able to come up with something. The trick then is just getting enough support for it.

5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

Dissertations have been written on this topic. People of color have been intentionally targeted in the justice system. Members of Nixon's administration are on the record saying as much -- that the drug war was a roundabout way to target black people by criminalizing the drugs they used -- but it goes much further back and deeper than that.

So, there are any number of things we could do. For one thing, I want to explore what we can do to decriminalize drugs on the local level. There are some cities that have done this by making marijuana use

a misdemeanor punishable by a \$1 fine. Can we do that? Can we do that for all drugs? Can we just instruct the police force not to enforce drug law? What happens if we do that? I want to find out.

In terms of reforming the criminal justice system more broadly, Shaun King's reforms are a good start. We also need to recognize the conflicts of interest we have locally - Judge Mary Ellen Diekhoff should not be signing warrants for her husband, Police Chief Mike Diekhoff's officers. Nor should she be trying cases in which they are involved.

Going further, I think it's important to understand that our police are a violence response force, first and foremost. They are trained to respond to violence. That training is an absolutely terrible fit for most of the things we're asking them to do - everything from dealing with the homeless to mediating neighborhood disputes. I think we need to stop using the police to solve all of the community's problems. We should hire trained and certified social workers to help the homeless (and we should also just house them, because housing first works) and with those in need of recovery support. We should hire mediators to resolve neighborhood disputes (we don't need to send armed officers to the doors of our neighbors who are just partying too loud - a mediator is a better fit for that).

We should retain the police force just for instances of truly violent crime, and off load much of the rest of the work they do on to people better trained to deal with those challenges. This will vastly reduce the workload of the police force and allow them to better focus on the things they are trained for.

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

I absolutely support the establishment of a 311 line, connecting people with the previously mentioned social workers and mediators. As for false reporting, isn't false reporting already a crime? Those cases should be charged as such.

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

Most of my time has been spent imagining a society without climate change, without ecological collapse, and without capitalism (or economic authoritarianism), so I will readily admit that I'm not sure what a society without prisons would look like. But I want to believe that it's possible, and I know there are folks out there imagining it. I've seen those working on it nationally go by on my facebook feed, and I've worked closely (on other issues) with many of those working on it locally. I need to find the time to do the research, read the articles, watch the videos, and speak with those doing the work.

8. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

Again, restorative justice is something I'm aware of and supportive of, but do not have anything resembling expertise in. The goal of restorative justice, broadly speaking, is to achieve justice without punishment for punishment's sake. It's to fix the hurt that has been caused without causing further harm. Often this involves some sort of mediation process between the offender and victim, or a broader community. Sometimes it can involve some sort of restitution or measures to ensure the offender doesn't recommit.

Obviously, there are many cases where it can get very challenging, when there is an impasse or the victim feels the offender represents a present and continuing threat to their safety.

That said, I think restorative justice is extremely important and we should work to build it more firmly into our criminal justice system. Off the top of my head, I'm not entirely sure how to go about that from city council, but I'm definitely interested in exploring it.

David Rollo
City Council District 4

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I support affordable housing, for all Bloomington residents. I have supported Mayor Hamilton's Housing Fund that has assisted in creating over 600 affordable units in our community over the past 3 years. I introduced density incentives within our current code for additional density in exchange for affordable units. During my service on Council I've also supported several high density co-housing developments (Dandelion Village, and Bloomington Co-housing).

As described in the Comprehensive Plan, density increases should be placed on neighborhood edges. Imposing density, such as the proposed UDO implies within RC (Residential Core) and RS (Residential Single Family) zoning districts are very likely not affordable, but very likely market rate.

However, cottage style zoning in new developments has potential for affordability, with higher density, and as tiny detached homes, they allow low-income residents to purchase and build equity, as opposed simply occupying rental units.

High density affordable units can be constructed by the City, perhaps in conjunction with private developers at the West Second St. Focus Area (Hospital Site), and the North and South Gateway Focus Areas. These areas are close to downtown, and are accessible to commercial areas and our Transit Station, and so are located where low-income residents may live without the need for a car.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

- *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."*
(<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)

I have not been able, within the time allotted (less than a week) to determine if the national trends referenced applies to the MCCSC. Clearly, educational opportunity and positive school experiences provide the means for students to avoid life choices that may lead to prison. I would support the MCCSC in their attempts to remedy disproportionate rates of detention, suspension and expulsion in the ways that they, as education specialists, see fit.

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

Privilege is differential advantages based on resources, race, gender, and social status. As someone who has benefitted from advantages, I bring empathy into decision making processes – to consider those who have had less advantages in determining a right course of action. I would continue to listen, and be guided by those whose experience is different than mine.

4. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a

policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?

In budget review, I examine every line item critically. In working with the Mayor, I seek to establish shared priorities, or if not, I am open about criticizing the direction of expenditures. With regard to harmful policies for people of color, I would amend the budget to remove the expenditure, or alert the Council, Mayor and community that spending was lacking. I have delayed budgets where an inappropriate policy was proposed to be implemented in the past, and if actually harm was being inflicted, I wouldn't hesitate to do so in the future.

5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

The criminal justice system works in conjunction with an economic system that disenfranchises many people of color. Without proper investment within communities of color, the social fabric is stressed, and both children and adults are at risk. Most prison populations reflect the inadequate educational opportunities, job opportunities and social support that afflict low-income, and disproportionately, communities of color. Poor individuals rarely receive adequate legal representation, and are often not able to defend themselves adequately in the legal system. There is also a profit incentive of private prisons, and industries associated with prisons that exploit our reaction to crime by lobbying for more, or larger, prisons. This cycle is unjust, and is tremendously damaging to society. If we are to solve it, we need to focus on just wages, adequate healthcare, and educational investment to those in poor communities.

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

Yes, I understand Marion County has established this service, and it seems very helpful. Making a false police report is serious, and I regard it as extremely serious if it is racially motivated. It is a form of hate crime, and I think it should be punishable as a felony.

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

I think most people are capable of reform, if given the proper resources, guidance, and counseling. There would inevitably be some who have psychopathic tendencies that require removing them from society as evidence indicates strong heritability in some cases. This doesn't mean that those removed should be treated inhumanely, but rather provided with resources that

provide those individuals with as productive and fulfilling a life as possible, without the means to do harm to others.

8. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

Reconciliation of the offender with the victim and society is a powerful tool in healing and preventing further crime or simply resolving conflict. I would support greater resources to our Safe and Civil City Program for community education on the benefits of restorative justice, and City support to organizations such as CJAM and others that utilize and excel in these practices.

Denise Valkyrie
City Council District 1

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire Please copy and paste.

Please complete all 8 questions and send back to blacklivesmatterbtown@gmail.com

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? *I believe that the city should push the state to allow us to support a minimum wage that reflects the true cost of housing in the city for those who are not students. I believe that the city must work with the county to improve housing options and transportation modes. Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing. No. I grew up in a city with density housing and I do not support it for any particular group of people, I especially do not support it for people of any particular race, family size or age. I believe that density housing is unhealthy and causes more problems than it solves. I believe that home ownership and affordable housing can go hand in hand. I support Habitat for Humanity models of housing. I also believe that as the city grows and people move outside of the city limits that we should be looking at better modes of transportation, including trolley and rail.*

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention,

suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline?

Unfortunately, I can not speak to the rates about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington at this time. In 2002 the rate was 2 to 3 times higher than that of other races. I would imagine that the same is true today. This rate is known to set children up for the prison to pipeline because they are conditioned to live in a more punitive environment. Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC? Not only would I support it I have demanded it and have facilitated anti-bias training at the Peace Learning Center in Indianapolis for women throughout the state in order for them to take that training back to their homes. I believe that quarterly trainings need to be held, not only for adults but for children as well.

○ According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."

(<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)

3. How do you define privilege? Privilege is any advantage given to any group based on bias from their interactions with others. How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member?

It is hard for me to say. I earn less than 50k a year in fact I'll happily publish my tax returns and show my adjusted gross income that was 19K in 2018 and 17k in 2017. I am running against a white man who owns a construction company and has held the office for 3 terms. My other opponent is a well educated white woman who has managed eight campaigns and feels that it is her turn to run. I haven't finished college yet, and expect to in December. I waited to see if anyone else in my district would indicate any interest, and indeed I even asked if they did. Privilege for me is something I am well aware of. I've seen it in action on my behalf, and on my husband's behalf because we were white and on the "wrong side of town" in Kokomo, Indiana. I've heard my Hispanic neighbor tell us about being pulled over daily on his way to work by the same officers. I see it on behalf of those with money and long ties to established groups. I only experience a miniscule amount of what "others" do when they are discriminated against in job searches, loan applications and things as simple as shopping without being followed. If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities? I would pass the torch as Sister Bernice King suggested. I would work to help others recognize bias, in all its forms. I would work to be sure that economic equity and access

to excellent healthcare would be accessible to everyone. I would work to be sure that the neighborhoods in my district are treated equally and that property taxes would be capped for homeowners that do not rent their homes.

4. In a “Strong Mayor” state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget?

I am unable to answer this question, I would need do more research about this issue. If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy? Because the word potential is used in this question, I would have to say I would want more research into the issue and would never rush to a decision. I do know that the City Council could withhold funding to any particular project.

5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force?

Once again we have to go back to bias and the set up of the school to prison pipeline. I again would stress bias training and that the offices be reviewed quarterly on their outcomes with the express goal of reduction of arrest being equal to the reduction of criminal activity. I really don't want to give a history lesson here. We all know that the United States is still reeling from the atrocity of slavery and servitude. We know that populist leaders pit groups against “others.” I believe that the policing agencies need reflective of the communities they serve and once again, that they should be mandated to have quarterly bias training provided by different trainers. I have concerns about this because I don't believe that it is necessary for the police to be militarized. It expresses the fear that groups have against “others” again. I believe that there are better ways to provide a safe and civil city for all the people in our community.

Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it. Well, there was the purchase of an armored vehicle that caught the whole city off guard. While the purchase was in the works, it was pretty hush, hush until the media reported it. I wrote the mayor, and the city council and attended meetings with the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor as well as attended one of the council meetings. These efforts led to a written promise of heavily supervised use, but not the ultimate goal of stopping the purchase. There have been no studies that have shown that these armored vehicles have improved the safety and outcome for police officers or

for the communities in which they are implemented.

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? *Absolutely, the police are not trained in mental health care. What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice? They should be subject to a fine or jail time, depending on the call they made. But further than that, there should be some sort of "restorative" justice. How can we ever change a person if we don't try to expose them to the reasons their beliefs are false? We are not the sum of everything that came before us, we are the outcome of what has come before and it is up to us to improve the outcomes for ourselves and those who will come after us.*

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons? *Well, perhaps mental illness is diagnosed and properly treated. Perhaps my idea of justice is closely tied with prison. I cannot believe that prison is what is needed for inability to pay bills or for nonviolent crimes. I've giving a great deal of thought to this question. I've seen a man shot because he was dating a woman that another man thought belonged to him. I've seen a man stabbed to death because he ran over a frisbee. I've seen and known children that had been drugged or raped or left in filth until they died. I know that most of the time the people that did this to them experienced it themselves. My first job was with the juvenile court in Marion County working on behalf of these children. I would say a world without prisons would be a world in which people stop hurting each other. But that also looks like a world in which big brother watches us very closely.*

8. What does restorative justice look like to you?

For some issues I believe that restorative justice is the best action that we can take. We recently witnessed the first step in restorative justice in our own community. Public shaming and naming what the harm was. What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How? I don't want to give a bullshit reply to this. It is not something that I have focused on and only know a little about. That said, it is something I want to learn more about and if those methods have been successful. I do know that harm reduction programs have helped Bloomington reduce overdoses. And agencies like Planned Parenthood have reduced the number of women seeking abortions, while decreasing the spread of disease as well. As a City Council member the most that could be done is to pass referendums and to support these types of programs in the budget.

Dorothy Granger
City Council District 2

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire

Please copy and paste. Please complete all 8 questions and send back to blacklivesmatterbtown@gmail.com

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.
2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?
3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?
4. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?
5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.
6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?
7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

I want to start with the question of privilege as this helps define who I am. I am white so privilege is inherent in who I am. This realization hit me when I was in 6th grade and my parents told me my best friend couldn't come to my birthday party because she was black. Of course, she knew intimately why she was un-invited but it was new to me. Unfortunately, for only me

perhaps, that was the end of our friendship. I was devastated that Theresa no longer wanted to be my friend because she was so cool, and smart, and tall, and funny, and...but that divide was too hard to cross at that time. That was when I began to think about things I could do that Theresa could not and that has stayed with me my whole life.

I am still challenged to recognize my privilege and even today, it sometimes comes up and slaps me upside the head. But I do try to understand the role I play in all this and work to make positive change. I think about privilege and issues of sexism, racism, and all bias in the decisions I make on city council, the work I do, and the activities I take on.

For example, I do believe that racism impacts the rates of detention and graduation in our high schools. Racism is inherent in all our systems and that is where change must happen. If we can get kids to graduate successfully, AND if there are good jobs out there for kids then chance is reduced that young people will turn to something else to pave their way. I don't think Bloomington city council can or should determine initiatives related to public schools as this is the job of the school board. BUT, as individuals we can challenge the school board, we can actively support Black people who run for school board, we can engage in meaningful dialogue to try and impact initiatives that will support systemic changes!

It is the same thing for incarceration – racism results in disproportionality in the justice system. I think there are many changes we can implement to change this trend. The County is engaging in a “jail study” (I don't know what they are calling it) with a group that started “inclusivity consulting” --<https://inclusivity.consulting/> I am hoping they will look at not only statistics but implementation of “best practices” and help facilitate needed changes in the system. I hope the county sheriff will support chief Diekhoff's efforts to establish a LEAD program here as that should help as well.

You asked about a society in which there are no prisons and how that justice system would be different. Admittedly, I couldn't fathom that until someone shared with me a TED Talk with Deanna Van Buren! A whole new way of thinking for me – restorative justice that builds sympathy, eases PTSD, and reduces violent re-offense by 75%, etc. Not building jails but centers of engagement for victims and offenders. I think Centerstone's efforts to create a crisis diversion program and a LEAD program reflects a movement toward restorative justice and would like to hear other ideas as well!

Restorative justice focuses on “restoring” not incarcerating and involves the whole community, not a separate system. This concept is really exciting to me and hope we can do it. Our challenge is that all systems in place are rooted in racism and we have to be able to openly look at that!

Regarding a 311 system, I think we already have a busy 211 system that connects people to services in the community. I believe the “white shirts” officers are well trained to handle downtown crises situations and I am very supportive of ongoing training for *all* officers. (For us white folk, racism is so engrained that it will take waaaay more than one “diversity training” to help us change our way of viewing the world.) This combined with hired social work/case workers can easily direct people to needed services.

Affordable housing is on everyone's minds, all the time! I agree that Bloomington is indeed in the midst of an affordable housing crisis but don't agree that city government is mandating higher housing prices for tax revenue. Pricing comes from the developers and their profit margins and what the market will tolerate. The problem lies with our current zoning that allows for more and more of these apartment developments. Many of us on Council are against the proposed changes that *could* destroy core neighborhoods by allowing developers to tear down single-family homes to build apartment structures. This shuts out affordable housing for everyone when we lose an older single-family home to this type of development. I think "density" oftentimes means apartments but I really would like to see more *diversity in the stock* itself – small, affordable single-family homes; condominiums for purchase; etc. I absolutely do not want segregated housing – students go here, low income people go here, snappy homes go here...

I absolutely support affordable housing and want to see the administration develop more relationships with organizations such as SSCCAP, Habitat for Humanity, and South Central Indiana Housing Opportunities to collaborate on developments that are affordable to low income individuals and families. (We couldn't prioritize housing for people of color as that is against federal law.) I have supported tax incentives for developers that make that commitment to affordable and workforce housing and will continue to do so. I have supported the use of City Housing Development funds for affordable housing and will continue to do so.

The development of the old hospital site is a great opportunity to build that diversity I think we need in our housing stock. We can build small homes that are affordable to families and build amenities right there as well so much can be accessible. I support density when it meets a need in the community for diverse, affordable housing.

Regarding my role on City Council. I believe council and mayor operate as checks and balances to each other. I am very deliberative and thoughtful about the decisions I make and when something is put forth by the administration, if I agree it is because of that. I am not afraid to respectfully disagree. An example of this might be the decision to purchase a bear cat. As a result of that decision, council worked very hard to open up discussion with residents. I met with individuals from BLM to listen, to learn. I listed to public comment on both sides of the issue. I attended small meetings with people to hear concerns. I worked with administration to develop a way to compromise. And, Isabel Piedmont-Smith and I worked for almost a year to develop legislation that will ensure oversight by Council on proposed expenditures of \$100,000+ and open up these expenditures to public oversight as well.

As mentioned earlier, I don't always know when something is racist or potentially harmful to people of color but I do listen. I do ask questions. I do try to look at the big picture and think about long-term ramifications of decisions made. Theresa lives in my mind as a reminder to the racism that is imbedded in our society.

Thank you for this opportunity to think and share.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Granger,
Bloomington City Council District 2

Isabel Piedmont-Smith
City Council District 5

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire Please copy and paste.
Please complete all 8 questions and send back to blacklivesmatterbtown@gmail.com

Isabel Piedmont-Smith
City Council, District 5

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

Affordable housing is indeed a serious problem in Bloomington. The new draft Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) provides clear incentives to developers for making part or all of their multi-family housing units in a project affordable to residents in two low-income brackets: Those making between 80 and 120 percent AMI (Area Median Income), and those making less than 80 percent AMI. The affordability of the units must be permanent. I support the increased density allowed as incentives in the draft UDO.

The redevelopment of the site on which IU Health/Bloomington Hospital currently sits provides a great opportunity for affordable, non-student housing. The city will soon own and control 24 acres there, meaning the city can (and should) ensure part of the property is used for housing affordable for low-income families and first-time home owners.

The city cannot prioritize housing for people of color, but we can and do provide

resources for people who have suffered housing discrimination. Such complaints are investigated by the Bloomington Human Rights Commission. Through Jack Hopkins Social Service grants, the city has supported Life Designs, which provides housing for people with disabilities.

I don't believe the city government has a mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue. An increase in property values does not necessarily mean an increase in property tax revenues. An increase in net assessed property values would lead to a lower property tax rate.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

○ *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students." (<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)*

I learned the above fact at the State of the Black Community event in February 2018 (and heard it again at the February 2019 event), and I agree that racial bias probably is at play here. I would like to find out what kind of implicit bias training and racial sensitivity training is currently required for MCCSC teachers and staff, and whether they use restorative justice rather than punitive (in)justice in dealing with problems involving student behavior. I would encourage more training on overcoming bias, being sensitive to different cultures and races, and utilizing restorative justice methods. I would be open to city government partnering with MCCSC on this effort. We must end the school to prison pipeline.

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

Privilege encompasses the advantages that one social group has that others do not have. Privilege means access to resources and social status that is not earned but rather just goes along with being part of a group. I recognize that I have the privilege of being a

white person born into a middle-class family of European ancestry. I didn't do anything to earn this privilege, I just have it.

My privilege means that I have to stop and think about the impact my decisions on the City Council may have on those with less privilege. But I believe that, upon reflection, and by talking with people from other backgrounds, I have come closer to understanding the impacts of most of my pending decisions and taken those impacts into account. If re-elected, I will continue to apply affirmative action in my decisions about whom to appoint to city boards and commissions, and I will continue to listen to people of color to try to understand and meet their needs.

4. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?

As a City Council member I have never rubber-stamped proposals coming from the mayor's administration, always asked probing questions, and never assumed the mayor's way was the only way to address an issue. Council Member Dorothy Granger and I co-authored legislation last year that requires the mayor's administration to obtain City Council approval through a public process of any proposed expenditures of \$100,000 or more that were not previously approved by the Council in a public process. This legislation came about as a result of the Bearcat armored vehicle purchase by the Bloomington Police Department earlier in the year, which did not go through any public process before the vehicle was ordered.

As to policies potentially harmful to people of color, I would convey my concerns to the mayor and facilitate a conversation between the mayor's administration, members of the black community, and the city council so that we can change the policy to bring equal justice, opportunity, and access to all. I appreciate when members of the community bring concerns to the City Council during the public comment period, and always listen and try to help with the situation.

5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

The issue of bias in the law enforcement and criminal justice system is complex, and I would welcome data to better understand the causes of bias. In addition to people of color, low-income people are disproportionately victimized by the system, and unfortunately there are disproportionately more people of color who live in poverty. Poverty is often generational, and it is often accompanied by inadequate health care (mental and physical) which leads to greater poverty and extremely difficult pathways to recovery (including from addiction).

As for making the criminal justice system more equitable, first we have to make sure that no disadvantage comes from lack of funds. So diversion programs have to be free, cash bail needs to be abolished (except perhaps in the case of serious violent crimes), and the public defender system needs to be well-funded. These are county issues in Indiana, but if I can help as a City Council member, I would be glad to do so.

As to the militarization of the police force, I think it is a problem nation-wide, and Bloomington is not immune to it. The BPD has good training programs and policies in place to focus on a “guardian” model of policing rather than a “warrior” model, but there is room for improvement. I was dismayed in February 2018 to learn that the BPD ordered a Bearcat armored vehicle without going through any public process. I learned a lot from the constituents who protested the purchase, and I decided that the purchase should be canceled due to the level of distrust in the community that resulted from the WAY it was purchased. I would have preferred a clearly civilian alternative such as a Brinks truck. As you saw by my response to item 4, I worked with Dorothy Granger to prevent such a purchase without public oversight from happening again. The City Council also passed legislation in June 2018 that amended city code to prohibit the use of the armored vehicle for the purpose of crowd control or during non-violent public demonstrations. The ordinance also prohibits firearms, water cannons, or any other device capable of launching a projectile to be added to the vehicle.

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

It seems like a good idea to have an easy emergency phone number that does NOT connect to law enforcement, but rather provides other guidance in case of an emergency. I understand that minority communities often do not want to involve law enforcement and therefore do not dial 911 even if they are in urgent need of assistance. I don't know

much about the 311 option, so I would have to study this proposal, see if it works well in other cities (and how), and go from there.

The rash of incidents in which white people (mostly women) reported “crimes” that were clearly not crimes by black people to the police in the past year is horrible and, frankly, embarrassing. Embarrassment is of course a mild emotion compared to what people of color must feel. The presidency of Donald Trump has certainly contributed to white people being more open about their racism, and perhaps showing privileged people what people of color have known all along: Racism is alive and well in the USA.

Although it is already a crime to file a false police report and to lie to a police officer, it is not a crime to interpret innocent actions as threatening. Police responding to such a call should explain that there is no credible proof that a threat exists, and should ask the caller to not use 911 to report such “incidents.” Furthermore, we should try to prevent such calls through education and through community activities that bring people of different races together in positive ways.

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

A world without prisons would be one in which we address crimes through restorative justice and peacemaking rather than through a system of punishment that does not work. The US imprisons more people per capita than any other nation, but we do not have less crime. Locking people up does not work to deter crime. Methods that have been shown to reduce crime and/or recidivism include restorative justice, access to mental health and social support services, job training, and education.

If we had fewer prisons, many other problems would be reduced as well. For example, children could grow up with their parents at home, victims could have a greater level of satisfaction and less post-traumatic stress, offenders could keep their jobs and continue to earn money to support themselves and their families, and the stigma of having a criminal conviction would be alleviated.

8. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

Restorative justice happens when the offender, the victim, and other parties involved in a crime come together to discuss the harm caused by the crime and focus on the victim’s needs. I think in the case of non-violent crimes, restorative justice programs could

substitute criminal prosecution and punishment entirely, if both victim and offender are willing participants. For violent crimes, I am not sure whether restorative justice would be sufficient, but certainly it should be part of the criminal justice process. Perhaps for some violent offenses, such as domestic violence, more intensive compulsory mental health treatment should be required for the perpetrator.

I do not know enough about restorative justice programs to indicate which ones I would support as an elected official. Locally, the criminal justice system is the domain of the county government, not the city government, although collaborations between city and county could certainly be pursued.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions, or just to talk about city issues. I'm available at 812-219-2788, piedmontsmith4council@gmail.com (for campaign-related business) and piedmoni@bloomington.in.gov (for city government issues).

Jean Capler
City Council At-Large

Jean Capler responses to the Black Lives Matter B-town Questionnaire Submitted 4/17/19

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire

Please copy and paste. Please complete all 8 questions and send back to blacklivesmatterbtown@gmail.com

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

We must address the affordable housing crisis in our city. The most effective way to do this is to increase density throughout our city, and specifically in areas that are more walkable with needed resources and services nearby. This means that we need to allow judicious development of multifamily housing and accessory dwelling units in neighborhoods previously zoned for single family occupancy only. We also need to promote development of smaller homes on smaller lots instead of huge McMansions on large lots that cost more to build, sell for higher prices, and are less dense. As housing stock increases,

eventually competition for renters and home buyers will bring prices down. I know that the discussion around density is a huge, conflictual, and fearful discussion, and I hope that we can find a way to talk about this rationally and look at the evidence. I am in the process of reading articles on both sides of the issue, but in principle, I support increasing density. An additional benefit of allowing a variety of housing options in previously SFO-zoned areas is that it helps to integrate neighborhoods across socioeconomic and racial lines, which creates a healthier community. I think we can do this. Additionally, I support more apartment developments like Switchyard apartments that are specifically designed to be affordable and which include some units specifically for people with disabilities. I would support housing development targeted for people making under \$30,000 (the population that is unable to afford our current housing prices but make too much for many of the housing support programs available) which would then, because of economic disparities, include more people of color. I don't know that we can legally develop housing for people based on race or give priority to people based on race, but we can definitely do targeted outreach and promotion of the housing to people of color. This housing should also be targeted at people with disabilities and older adults who often are living in poverty (currently there are huge waitlists for the affordable senior housing units managed by Area 10 Agency on Aging). And absolutely, young families with children are struggling in our current housing market and need truly affordable starter homes.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

- *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."*
<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>

In our MCCSC school system, students of color still experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion, despite this fact being known for quite a while (as per reported in last year's "State of the Black Community" presentation). This targeting of students of color directly contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline. Students' education is interrupted by this excessive use of detention, suspension, and expulsion, making it more difficult to succeed in school and therefore diminishes their chances of college admission and better paying jobs. Discipline is recorded in the school record and kids are stigmatized as "trouble-makers". This also contributes to a sense of anger, futility and despair. This, combined with disparity in policing and our criminal justice system that targets people of color, leads directly to prison.

I would support city involvement in working with MCCSC to implement meaningful anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration since the health of our city depends on the health and progress of our kids, including students of color. However, I would want to make sure that any anti-bias training is done in a way that supports the on-going behavior change and culture change that is needed. This cannot be a matter of “check that box” kind of training! There needs to be tracking of outcomes—what happens with detention, suspension, and expulsion rates 1 year, two years, or 5 years out from the training? What does the school do to address faculty, staff, and admin who continue to exhibit bias? Do they support those staff through honest confrontation and counseling and then use discipline, even termination, if the confrontation and counseling does not work? And how will the schools go about seeking input and feedback from students of color and community members about ongoing problems?

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

Privilege is the cumulative set of benefits and an automatic status that accrues to members of a dominant group that is favored in our society, whether they want it or not, and whether they have hardships in their lives or not. I experience white privilege and middle-class privilege and privilege around my mostly non-disabled status and around my cisgender identity. I grew up Catholic and so, even though I no longer identify as Christian, I lived for years with the privilege of being a member of the dominant faith tradition in this country (although at times Catholics have been stigmatized by Protestants). As a white person in this country, I know that I already start out many strides ahead of people of color. My family’s socioeconomic status was not impeded by a history of slavery that prevented any accumulation of wealth to pass on to the next generation. I have rarely been in environments in which I was the racial minority. I have had mostly white teachers so did not have to worry about if my teacher might make negative assumptions about me or my behavior because of my race. As someone raised predominantly in the middle class, there are hardships associated with being poor and decisions one has to make that I don’t even think about. The same goes for privilege around not being identifiably disabled (although technically I have arthritis in one ankle that does impair some of my activities). And as a cisgender person, I am just swimming in privilege in this world...I don’t have to worry about judgment around my body and presentation when I leave the house (with the exception of being a woman of size) or go to the doctor or to work. Nor do I have to worry about being fired, attacked or killed because of my gender expression. As a lesbian, I have been very aware of the heterosexual privilege experienced by my straight friends and family, and have at times felt like I was living in a parallel but separate world from them since they had no clue about their own privilege. And so I worry that I may fall into that same trap; that, if elected, my blind spots about race and socioeconomic status and gender identity might lead me to make decisions that don’t take into account the impact on people of color, or transgender people, or people with lower incomes, or people with disabilities. And I also believe that, given my

privileged status in some regards, I need to use that privilege to speak up and advocate. Unfortunately, I have learned as a lesbian that advocacy by allies sometimes carries more “weight” and is more effective with the dominant group than advocacy by members of the oppressed group. That, in and of itself, is frustrating and insulting, but since that is the way it is, the least I can do is use what privilege I have to advocate and try to even up the playing field. So I plan to check in with people who can point out my blind spots, stay open to feedback, and work to center people who are marginalized and stigmatized in our community.

4. In a “Strong Mayor” state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor’s office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?

I believe it is vital to our community that city council act as a check on the power of the mayor’s office. My natural approach is to find ways to collaborate and, when there is disagreement or an overstep of power, to confront that through engagement, pointing out the problem, and offering solutions. But sometimes it’s necessary to push hard, to refuse to be complicit in bad policy, and to vocally and legislatively oppose bad policy. The city council has the power of the purse, and that is one crucial way to block bad policies. I expect that I will need to advocate to my fellow council members to help put the brakes on harmful policies from the mayor’s office or, if we cannot stop it, to find some way legislatively to minimize the damage (e.g. the legislation detailing parameters for use of the Bearcat).

5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

I guess the fact that the origins of our police forces in this country were as enforcers of slavery suggests the entire criminal justice system is stacked against people of color. While our modern-day police may reject this legacy, I have to wonder how much that heritage may subtly shape the culture and attitudes of our modern police forces, especially those that have not consciously addressed implicit bias in their members. Add to that the fact that white people seem to be prone to calling the police on people of color for doing just basic activities of life because people of color are perceived as threatening, and then when the police arrive, they also perceive people of color to be threatening (this is borne out in numerous studies in which black youth are perceived as being older and more threatening than their white counterparts). This leads to more arrests and, in the worst case, actual killing of people of color. Once in court, people of color are not included in diversion programs as often, and sentences for offenses are longer and more severe.

I would like to see a few practices and programs put in place.

- *First, I support the equitable implementation of Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion to prevent arrests and having to go through the court systems. But this MUST be implemented fairly, with people of color offered the program equally, and, regardless of if I am on the city council or not, I will be pushing for monitoring of this.*
- *We need to continue to do away with cash bail so people are not remaining incarcerated while awaiting trial and so are losing their jobs and homes and their lives are disrupted before they even get to court.*
- *We need to decriminalize possession of marijuana, since people of color are arrested more often for this.*
- *We need to waive the cost of participating in pre-trial diversion, as this cost is prohibitive for so many people, especially people of color who are already dealing with economic disparities.*
- *I'm sure there are other strategies to address the disparities in our criminal justice system, and I am open to exploring them. Bottom line—the mass incarceration of people of color has to stop, and that requires policy change at the local level.*

I have been horrified at the trend to militarize our police forces in this nation. My mom's family is from the Ferguson/Florissant area north of St. Louis, and the scenes of police in military gear and assault vehicles and shooting teargas at our own citizens (disappointingly, my white family members were not out there!)... on the heels of me having gone a couple months before to an outdoor concert in a park in Ferguson with such a racially and age-diverse crowd all up and dancing. I was horrified. And also very aware that I was oblivious at the time to the conditions for people of color that were living in Ferguson and enjoying that concert with me...

I am disturbed by the militarization of our police, and that seems to be related to the authoritarian approach we take in this country. It is unhealthy for everyone, but especially for people of color who are usually at the receiving end of that militarization. My first reaction to learning of the purchase of the Bearcat was to ask “why do we need that?” and to be very concerned about this step. I was not happy with the process that led to it either. I am open to hearing why the police feel they need it, and to hearing the concerns of people of color and others that are worried about this purchase, and to fully understanding all the views about it. But the process did not even allow for that community conversation. And because that conversation did not happen, people of color were harmed by now having to deal with the threat of what was happening. I think it was necessary to quickly escalate to peaceful and disruptive protest to slow the process and at least get legislation in place to limit the use of the Bearcat. As for my actions during this controversy, I regret that I was not more active in advocating around this beyond a few Facebook posts and some discussion with other people. To be candid...I was not emotionally in shape to do more at that point, which, in itself, is another example of privilege, because it wasn't my life on the line with a bearcat in town. So I had the

luxury of not taking greater action. I am disappointed in myself. That experience left me more committed to not avoiding taking more action in future situations because I still feel bad about this one.

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

I think this is a great idea and would like to know more about how we could implement this!

This is an even better option than LEAD because it completely bypasses the involvement of police and fosters more of a community responsibility for each other. If we want to move people away from just calling the police (with chance of escalation), we need to have options available and a program to promote those options and get people to use it. We need to create a culture change in which people's first action is to look to the community to help in a situation rather than calling the police. I believe that people who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice are doing harm and committing an affront to our social contract, just as is a person who assaults someone or steals from them. And the police being involved is an automatically dangerous situation for people of color. So this is serious. I think people who do this should be offered a choice between paying a fine or participating in a high-quality bias training program so that they will be less likely to cause more harm in the future.

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

In a world without prisons restorative justice would be the norm instead of criminal justice. Justice would be based on a healthy relationship model of clear confrontation, acceptance of responsibility, and making reparations, rather than on an authoritative one in which "justice" is defined by those in power and enforced on the "offender". Reconciliation and full reintegration would be the goal. Compassion and connection would replace punishment and banishment.

A society in which there are no prisons would be fundamentally different from our current structure that is based on inequality, the myth of "good people" and "bad people", and is designed to maintain white privilege and socio-economic privilege. In a world without prisons, there would be no profit to be made by keeping prison beds full and perpetuating the modern-day slavery of "prison wages" paid for making goods to be sold for profit. There would be no way to enforce and maintain white supremacy and, in the process, quell rebellion in the ranks of poor whites to maintain our current system of gross economic inequality. So, we would really need to transform our entire society into one in which ALL people are valued, our educational system supports the potential of all our children, and everyone has the opportunity to have a decent standard of living and full access to healthcare.

In a society without prisons, even our culture's basic mindset and psychology would have to be different. We would move from a place of white people's fearfulness and privilege to a much healthier sense of full community. So white people would stop calling the police on "suspicious" or "threatening" people (people of color) simply for grilling out or taking a nap in a common area of a dorm, or leaving from a vacation rental. And people of color could live their lives without the constant fear of arrest, assault, or death.

On a personal note, through my job I had an opportunity to work for 6 months with men who were incarcerated on the veterans' unit at a nearby prison and had a history of brain injury. This was a minimum-security facility with a garden, classrooms, and "dorms". Even in this less imposing and restrictive prison setting, I was so conscious of the oppressiveness of this system, of the powerlessness of the people living in this environment, and of the dehumanizing effect of even the language used ("offenders"). I have also been inside our Monroe County jail and I am just overwhelmed with the thought of how many people are stuck in these traumatizing places. The space itself is just bad for the soul. And when I expand this to think about the full system in our country, and what we are doing to so many of our fellow human beings, many of whom are trapped in this system because of the effects of childhood trauma and the structural inequities in our system, and now we are re-traumatizing them all over again; I am overwhelmed.

Honestly, the changes that would be required in our culture to bring about a world without prisons seem daunting because our society has so much invested in maintaining the status quo. There are profits to be made, power structures to maintain, and white comfort to protect by "othering" black and brown people. We would have to do a better job of providing supports for people instead of treating mental illness and substance use issues as a crime. We would need to see housing as a human right, and healthcare as a human right. We would have to develop trauma-informed communities. Yet the positive transformation that would result from a world without prisons in which we do justice differently would be enormous. It would be healthier for everyone. We would benefit from the talents and contributions of everyone instead of writing some people off and locking them out of our community. We could be so much better!

8. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

What I know about restorative justice comes from what I have read and from a few people I've talked with who I consider to be well versed in restorative justice practices. It is a facilitated process that can take the place of going through the criminal justice system and in which the person who was harmed is supported in being able to speak whatever they want to say to the person who did harm, and the person who did harm is supported in listening, examining their role in causing harm, and taking responsibility for that harm and making amends. This approach gives me hope that we can move our society into a

healthier way of being, and, as a clinical social worker, it appeals to me because it is grounded in fostering healthy relationships with each other in the community and becoming healthier individuals (eg, being honest about the harm caused and taking responsibility for it), in the idea of a community taking care of the conflicts that occur rather than an authoritative system doing it. It is grounded in the idea of, for the person who did harm, taking responsibility, making amends, and finding redemption, and for the person who was harmed, to find empowerment, to be cared for and supported and believed, and to maybe heal from through the process or at least find closure.

I am aware of the Bloomington Center for Justice and Mediation. While I have not had much contact with the Center, I know that it offers to facilitate restorative justice processes. However, I have no idea how well they do this. I am open to exploring more options for promoting restorative justice approaches in Bloomington and will commit to doing more research on this approach and how it's been used in other communities.

Kate Rosenbarger
City Council District 1

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire

Please copy and paste. Please complete all 8 questions and send back to blacklivesmatterbtown@gmail.com

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

We have an affordable housing crisis in Bloomington. I recently attended the United Way's breakfast on homelessness and learned from the Executive Director at New Hope that there are homeless families ready for homes. The reality is, however, that housing availability and affordability are significant problems in Bloomington. Our non-student housing supply is so low with the consequences being that it's driving up prices. The result being that residents cannot find homes to rent or buy.

As research and evidence suggests, where we live significantly influences our health, our economic potential, and our children's futures. Everyone—no matter age, ability, income, or race—deserves the option to live somewhere affordable, convenient, beautiful, and safe.

We can create opportunities for low income people and people of color to live in affordable homes in two major ways: First, by creating small new neighborhoods along the east side of South Walnut and at the current hospital site, allowing more people to live in walkable, transit-oriented areas near jobs and amenities; and second, by bridging the gap between market rate home prices and what a family or individual can afford.

Increasing our Housing Supply to Increase Equity

In the U.S., we have systems in place that perpetuate income and racial inequities. Local zoning—and the associated policies and practices—continues to widen the income and racial gap. As Bloomington's population increases, we have to come together to find creative solutions to our housing crisis. I feel strongly that we must add housing to our city in walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented areas so everyone, especially people of color and low-income families, can have access to safe, affordable housing.

Programs to Increase Homeownership

Black people and other minoritized peoples significantly lag behind white people in homeownership rates, which is a major factor contributing to the racial wealth gap. At NeighborWorks America, I worked on numerous programs geared toward homeownership for low income people and people of color. For example, financial capability counseling is a resource that has been proven to help individuals make lifestyle changes to reach milestones and eventually homeownership. Down payment and closing cost assistance programs help buyers who are financially ready to buy a home, but who need help with cash on hand. Post-purchase programs help new homeowners with maintenance, energy efficiency, and foreclosure prevention.

Bloomington is full of unique, historic, and eclectic neighborhoods. It is important to continue to cultivate neighborhood preservation that brings out the best of our neighborhoods while welcoming people of all income levels and backgrounds. I know that if we work on this together, we can create housing opportunities so everyone lives in a neighborhood they feel proud to call home.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would

you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

- *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."*
<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>

I have had conversations with many people about this as I canvass the district, but I need to more fully educate myself on this. I know that if a student is labeled at an early age as a "problem child," that label is very likely to transition with the student into a "problem adult." Students are labeled, stigmatized, treated inequitably and placed on different educational "tracks" that are racially and socioeconomically coded before they graduate, contributing to the school-to-prison pipeline.

I support implicit bias training for our school system staff and educators. Implicit bias creates inequities across systems, and the education system is no different. Good intentions to treat everyone equally is not enough. Implicit bias training is necessary to deal with deeply entrenched prejudice and differential treatment. Our biases are systemic, and we cannot help what we've learned, but we can work to unlearn them. Research shows that biased associations can be gradually unlearned and replaced with non-biased ones. I'd also like to prioritize programs in elementary schools to mentor students who may be struggling in their current circumstances.

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

I understand privilege as unearned advantage based on some embodied category of difference or based on a societal, socioeconomic, or demographic status. That is, as a white woman, I am afforded many benefits simply for being white. The benefit can be immediate or accrued over time, through generations, and can implicitly favor one group over others. In the U.S., speaking English as a first language is a privilege and not a choice, and this privilege helps me learn, navigate my surroundings, and communicate with others easier than those who may not have the same privilege.

My goal, whether elected or not, is to make sure that all residents in our community, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, income, education or housing status, can live a life of integrity and also feel welcome and supported in this community.

As a white person who has benefited (and continues to benefit) from the construct of race, I feel it is up to me to do my part to bring awareness to the history of cultural and systemic racism in our country, and to take steps to repair our systems so our laws, policies, and practices no longer perpetuate racism. When TEDxBloomington offered me the Executive Director position, I

jumped at the opportunity. With our country being so polarized by politics, I find TED to be a safe space to cultivate community and to have these difficult but necessary conversations in Bloomington. As I learn more, I continue to evolve, and I hope the same for the Bloomington community.

- 4. In a “Strong Mayor” state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor’s office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?**

I see a City Council person’s role as two-fold: First, I find it important for the City Council to have a good working relationship with the Mayor’s office: to work collaboratively and transparently on important issues facing the city; to have an open and honest channel of communication; and to know that we all share the same goal--to improve the lives of all of our residents. Every Council person votes on proposals from the administration, and I believe we can be more efficient if Council weighs in on the process before the policies land in front of them for a vote. I know there can be distrust, gridlock, and inefficiencies in city government. I want to push the administration to be more open with council: to share more data and information, to be more transparent in their processes, and to present all sides during their presentations. While city council is a check and balance on the administration, it does not need to be so contentious.

And this brings me to the second role of city council - to act as a check on the administration, and to provide proper oversight and restraint. As an attorney, I have no problem calling out improper procedures or policies, or calling out what I consider to be an irresponsible use of funds. If I am elected, I will be on council to advocate for social, racial, and environmental justice, and that will guide everything I do. I see my role on council as being more proactive than the current Council--to be involved in shaping policies, to ask questions, to write legislation, and to advocate for my residents and my city.

- 5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.**

Systemic racial disparities in our criminal just system are real as a result of historical racism. We cannot help what we have learned, but we must work to unlearn it. Here are three initiatives I support:

First, our justice system should create a law enforcement assisted diversion program (LEAD). This allows law enforcement to divert low-level offenders to community-based services instead of jail. Research shows that LEAD programs reduce criminal behavior of people who participate in the program.

Second, our justice system should prioritize implicit bias training. I know we do some, but more is needed. Data shows that implicit bias training has significant influence in the outcomes between police and citizens, specifically related to shooter bias and police stops. Reducing implicit bias is vitally important to strengthening our relationships between police and communities of color.

Third, we need to treat substance use disorders for what they are—health issues, not criminal issues. We need to work on decreasing the stigma of substance use disorders (SUDs) and treat patients as we treat someone with a medical disease. Individuals suffering from SUDs need supportive services and medical attention, not time in jail.

Militarization of the police is a disturbing nationwide trend that we should work to avoid here in Bloomington. I believe our government was mightily out of touch and out of bounds when we purchased the armored vehicle in 2018. Had the administration solicited public comment and collaborated with Council, I do not think we would have a militarized police vehicle today. I believe decisions of this magnitude deserve ample public outreach and engagement.

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

I would support a 311 option that connects people to location organizations. A 311 option would be valuable given the distrust toward police enforcement among communities of color. It would give people in crisis situations a safe number to call to get help. There is a history of racial profiling and disproportionate treatment of black and brown communities such that we need to address implicit and explicit racism. I need to more fully education myself on this option, but I do support a 311 number for those in a crisis.

We can't deny someone's experience of being targeted based on their race, sex or class. False reports are hard to arbitrate because our history is replete with systemic racism, sexism, and classism. For people who do not experience racism, sexism, or classism, they might not recognize how embedded it is in our systems, institutions, and history. We need to use schools, government and other community institutions to help educate and bring awareness to historic racism, sexism, and classism so we increase cultural competency.

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

Research shows that our prison system is built to subjugate people of color, specifically black people. We use prisons to solve society's social issues; but by imprisoning people, we are most likely worsening the problems we are trying to remedy. In Bloomington, New Leaf New Life is the only nonprofit we have to rehabilitate and reintegrate people after time in prison.

A society without prisons has increased social services and support centers, and it is focused on rehabilitation and community building. A society without prisons would prioritize supporting individuals and families and keeping people out of poverty—providing healthcare, housing, and universal basic income, since we know crime is linked to systems of poverty. Society would be sure that no one is left behind.

8. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

Restorative justice is about leveling the playing field across all systems—education, criminal justice, housing, transit, and more. It's about recognizing that the systems are highly inequitable and not everyone has equal access. We have to repair harms that our systems perpetuate. And, we must begin to change our systems from the inside out and from the top down.

Matt Flaherty
City Council At-Large

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I agree that we have a housing affordability crisis in Bloomington. This includes not only people who may qualify by income for various affordable housing options, but also many low- and middle-income people who are struggling to meet their housing needs, whether renting or trying to buy a home. Our community is growing, and non-student workforce housing is deeply needed. To date, many City Council members have not been particularly honest about these objective

challenges, instead focusing on exclusion and inciting fear of others (students, developers, anyone making change). I am not insensitive to people's concerns about their neighborhoods, but I also understand that if we want to be equitable and inclusive and if we want to live sustainably, then we need to increase housing stock. The more we create scarcity, the more unaffordable housing becomes. As with all issues, I think it is important to conduct research, consult experts, and pursue data-driven and evidence-based policy making. This is what I have done in the context of our housing affordability crisis, reaching out to many experts in our community and elsewhere, conducting extensive research, and learning more.

What experts say and evidence shows, is that there are reasonable policy tools to ensure development fits within our city's fabric while also increasing housing stock and the diversity of housing options and sizes (including lot sizes) available, in order to enhance affordability across the board. It is a fact that our community is growing, and I believe we should grow in a way that allows people from varying income levels and backgrounds to share in and enjoy the benefits of our neighborhoods. If we continue to ignore this problem, housing prices will continue to make home ownership and even renting unaffordable to most. I fully support prioritizing this housing for people of color, lower income families, families with dependents, and people with disabilities, to the extent that we are do so via policy and legislation. As an attorney, I will work to find creative policy solutions where we are constrained by state law.

The priorities in our housing and development policy should be helping those who need it most; making sure we are enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in our community; and ensuring we have affordable workforce housing stock in Bloomington.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

- *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."*
(<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)

I don't have direct personal experience with suspension or detention rates of students of color in Bloomington, but I am aware of this problem and trend nationally, and I would support initiatives to address it locally. Hearing the experiences of young students of color at the State of the Black Community address in February was illuminating. I am glad that some in MCCSC and our community are stepping up to better serve students harmed by our institutions, but we as a community must always aim to do better, and I would hope to augment these efforts as a Council member.

I am currently reading Monique Morris's book, *Pushout*, which is helping to teach me more about this problem and how to address it — though of course I will always have blind spots and

will need to work vigilantly to always listen well and learn more. Michelle Alexander's book, *The New Jim Crow*, was also eye-opening for me in terms of making plain the staggering pervasiveness of discrimination and bias in our entire criminal justice system, including the school-to-prison pipeline.

I think all areas of City government, MCCSC, and others in our community will benefit from anti-bias training and training on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and I would unequivocally support such training. I know these efforts exist at some level at MCCSC, but it is likely something we can enhance, including ongoing or repeated training over time. Our social, criminal, and educational systems are quite clearly full of implicit and institutional bias and we need to continue to work to address and overcome these challenges together.

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

I define privilege as an unearned benefit a person enjoys owing to their racial, socio-economic, gender, sexual orientation, or other innate or perceived characteristics. Understanding how privilege skews our social systems has significantly affected my community engagement and political involvement and beliefs. I believe as someone who has benefitted and does benefit from unearned privilege, it is my responsibility to work to cede my privilege and work towards inclusive policies for all.

If elected, I will work to always use my privilege to benefit communities which are and have been economically and socially marginalized. I will always have more to learn, and it's on me to do my best to keep learning, listening, communicating, and making myself more aware of the challenges and discrimination members of our community face.

4. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?

I think the City Council has an important role to play in acting as a check and balance to the executive branch. From my conversations with current Council members, asking extensive questions of the Mayoral Administration, in writing, will be important to understanding the city's budget and exercising proper oversight. I also believe it will be important to reach out to departmental heads on City staff in order to better understand the budgets within specific departments.

It is difficult to speculate on exactly how City Council would curb or stop a hypothetical harmful policy without knowing the details. However, I can say that I am committed to racial justice in

our community, and as such, I would willingly use any procedural or budgetary tools available to work to curb such a policy.

5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

Our criminal justice system, as well as our social and economic systems, suffer from historic and pervasive racism and discrimination at both a conscious or intentional level, as well as at an unconscious level. We must work to address this racist legacy in all levels of our society and government, and especially in our criminal justice system.

Implicit bias training is important for all people working in our criminal justice system (and more), and while such training is utilized with the Bloomington Police Department, we will need to continue to look at data and the experiences of people of color to monitor how this is working. The pervasiveness of unconscious bias and racism in our entire social system means that it will likely take many years of training and ongoing efforts to help police and others to unlearn their biases.

As with many areas, I have much more to learn and would continue to consult the latest research, experts in this field, and learning more from the experiences of community members. As was discussed at the State of the Black Community address in February, there are racial disparities in sentencing rates and lengths, as well as the inability for lower income individuals to pay for pre-trial diversion programs. We should work with our partners in Monroe County government to continue reforming our criminal justice system. For instance, we could work to make diversion programs, e.g. LEAD, available to all people regardless of income. And this is of course only one small step among many needed reforms.

The City's decision to purchase a militarized police vehicle a little over a year ago was obviously a failure of our city government in how it interacts with our community. It should have been readily apparent that this would be deeply disturbing and controversial to many in our community, and thus, extensive community outreach should have been undertaken. If this process had been followed, we likely would not have reached the outcome we did. I was glad to see legislation brought by City Council to grant greater oversight and help avoid a similar issue in the future. I also believe this is part of a troubling trend in police militarization nationwide, and that our city officials should be very wary of any decisions that militarize our police. I would need to see a very compelling, evidence-based case made to justify any moves in this direction, and from what I know, I would not have supported this decision.

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

I believe I would support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and organizations that handle crisis situations, though I would need to learn more before stating this unequivocally. My understanding of 311 numbers is that they are traditionally used more for non-emergency services. However, I think having an alternative number for people to call who may be wary of contacting the police is a good idea. Not everyone feels comfortable contacting the police, and this should not prevent them from being able to access services.

Regarding false reports made to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice, I believe an effort should be made to help the person learn and understand why their false report was problematic. This will of course be difficult to implement, but it is a conversation worth having and I would be interested to look at how other communities address this challenge. We could also take proactive steps in our community to continue to help people to unlearn their prejudices and unconscious biases — through implicit bias training and diversity, equity, and inclusion training in schools, government, and in the community.

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

In a society without prisons, we would have a much more connected and equitable community. We would ameliorate root factors or underlying causes that lead to crime. We would have no homelessness or hunger, no poverty, and everyone's basic needs would be met. We need to always pursue policies that help move us in this direction, a more equitable society that prioritizes every person's human dignity. In this world, there would be little or no crime, and any crime would be addressed through communal conflict resolution.

8. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

My understanding of restorative justice is that it seeks to address and rectify the harms caused by crime, as opposed to focusing on punishing perpetrators of crimes. It incorporates accountability and the making of amends into the criminal justice system, or rather, as an alternative to traditional criminal justice practices. This includes addressing how victims have been affected by the crime and the potential for the perpetrator to help repair harm and make amends through a reconciliation process (if, of course, the victim wants this).

Like all Council members and candidates, we can not be experts on everything, and my framework to approaching potential restorative justice programs is to consult experts, conduct research, and look to evidence of programs utilized in other communities and our own. What I can say is that my political beliefs are in line with the mission and values of restorative justice as I understand it, and I would be very interested in exploring how we can better implement these practices in Bloomington.

Miah Michaelson
City Council District 4

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire

Please copy and paste. Please complete all 8 questions and send back to blacklivesmatterbtown@gmail.com

Miah Michaelson
Bloomington City Council District 4 candidate
Miahforbloomington.com
hello@miahforbloomington.com

- 1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.**

Before considering how to create the right opportunities for an increase in supply of low and moderately-priced homes, I would advocate for conducting a thorough housing study of Monroe County. This study would be a critical policy document serving as a housing needs assessment for the City, County and other stakeholders and providing an analysis of household affordability throughout all population segments of the community. The study would highlight expected demographic trends, future demands for housing, outline current regulations, identify obstacles preventing the market from effectively responding to this demand and provide an inventory of the assets and programs currently available to help address these challenges. The Community Foundation is currently conducting a regional housing study which will provide information for the region and some information for the county, but a deep dive into the Monroe County housing market, which is unique in the region, is imperative.

Post-study, goals for strategic investments in housing should be established together by the City of Bloomington, Monroe County and other housing stakeholders to ensure adequate investments are made to support people of color including those with low incomes, families with dependents and individuals with disabilities. A shared housing dashboard should be created to update the community on progress towards overall these strategic investment goals.

Unlike many goods, which can quickly adjust to changes in market demand, the physical development of housing lags behind the factors that create demand. Housing

development, therefore, is slow to react to needs. Thus, creating an environment to increase supply of affordable housing should include the following:

- A reassessment of those zoning and land use regulations in both the city and the county that make difficult the construction of affordable housing units;
- A reassessment of current available affordable housing incentives to ensure they are appropriate and sufficient to encourage development of affordable housing and if not, developing better tools;
- Capacity-building for both small local developers of color and neighborhoods through an organization such as the Incremental Developer Alliance to strengthen developers' ability to design successful affordable housing development projects that support neighborhood goals;
- Enhanced support for programs such as the City of Bloomington's Housing and Neighborhood Development Department's Homebuyer's program, to provide resources and support for first-time home buyers;
- An economic development strategy that has as a high priority the recruitment of higher wage jobs and paid training for those transitioning into those jobs.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

- *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."*

(<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)

I do not have current data related to suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. The research on the disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion among students of color is clear, however. According to the ACLU, black students represent 31% of school-related arrests and black students are suspended and expelled three times more than white students. Students suspended or expelled for a discretionary violation are nearly three times more likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system the following year.

Continued investments in interventions such as anti-bias training for MCCSC administrators, faculty and staff as identified by the Corporation's Equity, Access and Opportunity Steering Committee with the guidance of MCCSC's Equity and Inclusion Coordinator, Rafi Hasan, are critical. Another intervention worth exploring (via research by the ACLU) include a greater emphasis on providing health and mental health services to students: "Schools that employ more school-based mental health providers see improved

attendance rates, lower rates of suspension and other disciplinary incidents, expulsion, improved academic achievement and career preparation, and improved graduation rates. Data shows that school staff who provide health and mental health services to our children not only improve the health outcomes for those students, but also improve school safety.” I believe strongly that more mental health support for students should be a MCCSC priority.

- 3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?**

I define white privilege as a “built-in advantage”, separate from level of income or effort. White privilege offers structural advantages in citizen engagement; I have the ability to flex my work time or allocate other resources to devote to community engagement that people of color often don’t. If elected, I would use my privilege to investigate what actions I can take to help; learn when to listen, and when to speak up; educate myself and others; be active when I see people of color confronted and let them know I am there to support them. And it most certainly should mean engaging directly in anti-bias work, such as instilling more inclusive practices.

- 4. In a “Strong Mayor” state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor’s office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?**

Although given separate governmental duties and responsibilities in Indiana Code, the Office of the Mayor and the Common Council must by necessity work closely together to identify goals and outcomes, establish funding priorities and develop the legislative calendar to ensure the City’s business gets done. I’ll bring my experience in state government working for a highly transparent agency with citizen participation at all levels of decision-making to bear in my role as a member of City Council. In my current work, I ensure that staff and Commissioners hold each other to transparency, straightforward communication standards, and inclusive policy positions and will call out instances of noncompliance.

- 5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.**

Nationally, one reason people of color are stopped disproportionately is because police see violations where they are.

In order to determine how best to make our justice system more equitable, I would recommend that we consider the analysis of previous cases in Monroe County via a process advocated for by several national partners including the Brennan Center for Justice – Conviction Review Units. Conviction Review Units examine old cases to determine whether the outcomes were tainted by unjust practices, faulty evidence, or bias. CRUs provide helpful mechanisms for revisiting cases previously believed to be justly prosecuted but which, in fact, may not be. Since they were first created in the early 2000s, CRUs have expanded from reviewing claims of actual innocence to reviewing due process violations. Some offices are considering extending these principles to the review of past excessive sentences. The CRU can be used to identify and address erroneous causes of prosecutions and incorporate learning into training and policy changes.

My concern about militarization is the ongoing access to military surplus equipment for local police use. I support processes and policies that guide the acquisition and appropriate use of such equipment in a transparent manner.

- 6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?**

I'd like to learn more about the concept. Areas of concern for me are that in many communities a 311 service provides non-emergency government information to citizens. Changing the function of 311 in Bloomington could be confusing. Additionally, putting the citizen in the position of determining what kind of crisis necessitates a call to which number could lose precious minutes. I do believe an opportunity exists to elevate the scope and visibility of current phone hotlines or other resources that connect citizens in crisis - who are or know someone else who is struggling with a mental health issue including suicide – or are experiencing domestic violence or know someone who is. Such expanded scope and elevated visibility could serve a similar function - to divert some emergency calls towards trained professionals who can provide immediate assistance to those in need. Although I'm sympathetic to those who might want punitive action for those who make egregious false reports, I'd recommend working with the justice system on diversion programs (at least for first offenders) into bias, profiling and other types of teaching/training to build awareness and sensitivity to this area.

- 7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?**

A society without prisons works to ensure universal basic income, housing, and healthcare, recognizing that crime is inextricably linked to poverty. A world without prisons is built on social welfare systems to make sure that no one falls through the cracks. On a basic, personal level, society would have to forgo a desire for officially sanctioned recompense against predators — for revenge, really — that we have long taken for granted.

8. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

Restorative justice focuses on healing and rehabilitation. A nationally recognized program that I would like to replicate in Bloomington is the restorative justice program within Mural Arts Philadelphia, the nation's largest public art program. The program facilitates the forging and growth of strong, positive bonds between incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals, young adults on probation, and their respective neighborhoods. Current inmates, probationers, and parolees are given the opportunity to learn new skills and make a positive contribution, to repair harm to communities impacted by crime through neighborhood projects. They receive art instruction, work on new murals, and perform other community service work, helping to shift community perceptions through these constructive contributions. Restorative justice participants often feel empowered by their accomplishments and emerge with a newfound sense of pride in their own abilities and enhanced employment readiness skills. Their finished artworks provide everyone with significant reminders of how far they have come, highlighting a hopeful path forward.

How? The City of Bloomington has been working in the mural production space with non-artists already; transitioning into this work would entail seeking outside funding for artistic services and production costs and identifying program partners experienced in working with the formerly incarcerated.

Nicole Bolden
City Clerk

Nicole Bolden Wed, Apr 17, 3:40 PM (21 hours ago)

to me

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

While it is not part of the Clerk's role to make policy, I believe it is imperative to give voice to those who are not normally heard from in our city council meetings. I have discussed my experiences as a person of color, who made less than \$30,000 a year, and a single-parent. I know what it is like to not make enough money to pay rent while working a full time job in Bloomington.

There is a balance to be made with supporting our core neighborhoods, avoiding sprawl, and increasing density. But it requires more research and a commitment to finding creative solutions that allow us to work around the restrictions put on the city by the state. We need more types of housing stock in the city which will permit for more families and workers to live here. It cannot all be geared toward short-term residents in the city, who definitely add value, but also help to keep the market rate higher than what the average worker can afford.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

○ According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."

(<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)

What information I have about the schools in Bloomington is largely from my experience as a parent of black girls in a predominately white school system. Anecdotally, I have seen and heard from other parents about race-related issues in the schools.

I think that an anti-bias initiative is long overdue both at MCCSC and at the city itself. We need leadership that is committed to making that happen, that will follow through and not just give lip-service to the need for diversity training. I will do my part to hold my elected officials accountable and hope that others in our community do as well.

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

In general, I define it as unearned benefits that someone has by virtue of their position, race, education, socio-economic status, class, etc. As a black, female, elected official I am aware of the times when privilege works both for and against me. I try to be cognizant of the ways in which I can help to raise the voices of those who would not normally be heard when I can, and make sure that other elected officials are aware of the ways in which their own privilege may lead them to make policies that are not inclusive.

4. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

To the best of my knowledge, it starts with an inaccurate narrative that suggests more people of color commit crimes. Which then leads to over policing, heavier prosecutions, and harsher sentencing. I think starting with how crimes are charged by prosecutors can help to alleviate many problems. I also think that ongoing and continuous education (not just a couple of classes) about bias would be helpful to everyone involved in the criminal justice system. And that includes our elected officials, who frequently appoint those in charge if they are not directly elected.

I think the militarization of our police force is concerning for several people, as we saw during the discussion of the city's replacement of the CIRT vehicle. I think there were good intentions

and reasonable explanations offered, but I would have preferred to have more public input prior to the decision. I would especially have liked to see more input from those who were most likely to have a negative impact from their interactions with the police. But I think that begins with having more people of color in the room when options are being discussed and when decisions are being made. We simply do not have enough diversity in our local government.

5. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

When I first ran in 2015 I frequently suggested that the Clerk's office serve as the hub for 311, which some council members expressed an interest in starting. I still believe it would be valuable to have one office function as the center of our citizen outreach and education.

I believe that people who make false or misleading reports based on profiling or prejudice should have consequences. I think the most valuable steps would be to have education and training. It is too easy to vilify people for their ignorance and hatred. The harder step is to work with them so they do not cause further harm to our most vulnerable citizens.

6. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

A society that has no prisons would have to be a society that has decided that life is precious, that freedom is priceless, and that it would behoove the state to not behave in a punitive and violent manner toward those who violate its norms. It would mean a system where the justice system did not function as a catchall for all of our societal problems, but instead would have a system that would work to identify issues before they became a criminal or societal ill. Lack of prisons suggests a different approach across all aspects of culture.

The ACLU has a campaign to reduce the prison population by fifty percent through reform to bail, prosecution, sentencing, parole, and re-entry. I believe that is a good place to start for our society, because I do not think that outright abolishment is likely to happen overnight. But small steps in the right direction can have an enormous positive impact for all of our citizens.

7. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

Restorative justice looks like repairing the harm to people that were impacted by the offense. It is recognizing that the damage caused by crimes that impacts the community, and provides some mechanisms for collaboration and mediation.

I support the mission of the Community Justice & Mediation Center (CJAM) here in Bloomington, and try to refer people to its services on a regular basis.

Ron Smith
City Council

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire

Please copy and paste. Please complete all 8 questions and send back to blacklivesmatterbtown@gmail.com

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

Having background in social services and recognizing the historical challenges people of color have had in building equity through housing, I certainly support affordable housing. I would also support affordable housing programs that prioritize people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities. Enhancing programs such as Habitat for Humanity and home buyer's initiatives such as the City of Bloomington Hand department are models that we should grow. I have initiated meetings on the Kmart redevelopment and affordable/non-student housing has been identified as a desired outcome of the development. Density is a difficult quality to figure into the equation. I support following the development density standards in the Unified Development Ordinance. Affordable single-family dwellings are the best way to help people build generational wealth for future generations. Density needs to be discussed further.

2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your

knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

- *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."*
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The disparity of suspensions and expulsions for students of color versus white students is troubling and likely contributes to the school to prison pipeline. I do support anti-bias training in our local schools and law enforcement. Some of it has already occurred and should continue. We also need to initiate better data collection on a local level to develop a clear picture of the extent of the problem.

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

Privilege is a structural, historical, and/or economic condition that gives some people an advantage over others. As a white male having a Masters in Social Work, I am aware that this privilege has impacted how I have lived, where I have worked and what has happened to me in my life. I am also aware that if elected as a public official it is imperative to use my position to help people who have not have this advantage.

4. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?

The City Council must act as a counter balance to the "Strong Mayor" model. Most importantly, City Council should engage with communities of color to find out how city initiatives impact their lives and push back against policies that are viewed as harmful.

5. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

The criminal justice system has been inherently and historically biased perhaps from the years after the civil war where the justice system was used by whites to keep their privilege,

their advantage over people of color. I believe to make the justice system more equitable and impartial more people of color should be recruited into the criminal justice profession.

The militarization of our police force is frightening. The purchase of the Bearcat without the City Council being fully informed is such a specific issue. The City Council has implemented rules to prevent such a purchase by the city without council consultation and vote and I will support a continuance of such policy.

6. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

Yes, I would support establishing a 311 number connecting people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police. This would benefit people in crisis by trying to avoid a police confrontation, and also benefit police by adding manpower to city policing. I'm not sure how to think about people who may make false reports to the 311 number. Perception is in the eye of the beholder so one person may perceive a hate crime where another may not. This is a challenging issue that should have a community group to look at the incidents.

7. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

In a society where there are no prisons, there would be no jealousy, no envy, no crime and everyone would be equal. The justice system would be unbiased and disputes would be settled peaceably.

8. What does restorative justice look like to you?

Restorative justice has been a model where often the perpetrator participates in making the harmed person whole again by meeting with, discussing and coming to some understanding.

If elected, I would support increased funding for programs like (CJAM) Citizens Justice and Mediation and New Leaf and prison/jail reforms that include teaching employment and coping skills to inmates prior to release.

John Hamilton
Office of the Mayor

Black Lives Matter B-town 2019 Primary Questionnaire

- 1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.**

As Mayor I have made affordable housing a top priority. With our leadership, in the past three years, over 600 bedrooms of affordable housing have been preserved or built in Bloomington including B-Line Heights, Switchyard Apartments, Bloomington Cooperative Living (Middle Earth Location), Urban Station, Park South, Crescent Village, and more. We have established several new tools and approaches to achieve these results. I have worked to ensure that historically underrepresented populations are given affordable housing opportunities because if you can't afford to live in Bloomington, you can't thrive in Bloomington. I believe in a housing-first initiative to addressing chronic homelessness. As President of the Shalom Community Center Board, I worked to establish Crawford Housing, and as Mayor I have continued to collaborate with Shalom Center to establish Crawford II. I am proud to announce that in 2018, Evergreen Village opened as Bloomington's first Medicaid-accepting assisted living facility, serving low-income seniors. Looking forward, I plan to integrate new housing strategies in the City's Comprehensive Master Plan to continue providing long-term housing solutions for our city's most vulnerable populations.

- 2. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?**

○ *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, "black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students."*

(<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)

I don't have specific data about available rates in MCCSC. I do believe inappropriate enforcements at school can lead to the school-to-prison pipeline. Yes, I would support a

city-based initiative re anti-bias training for MCCSC.

3. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

To me, privilege is what happens when society is advantageous to a person as a result of their identification with majority groups and/or groups that have historically withheld power from others. As an elected official, I remain dedicated to ensure that Bloomington is welcoming to individuals from all walks of life. Thanks to the hardworking individuals throughout City government who share my commitment to protecting historically disenfranchised groups, Bloomington has received a perfect score from the Human Rights Campaign 3 years in a row--the only municipality in Indiana to do so. This commitment has proven to be effective, as our administration has increased the diversity within board and commission appointments and developed additional inclusive events like "Dia Latino de Voluntariado," or Latino Volunteer Day, during Hispanic Heritage Month. The Commission on Hispanic and Latino Affairs established the "Black y Brown Art Festival" last year, a free festival featuring Black and Brown artists.

4. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

As Mayor, I have been committed to ensuring that racial discrimination or targeting has no home in Bloomington. All Bloomington police officers wear body cameras to ensure greater accountability for their actions. In 2016, the BPD did a thorough report measuring our policies and actions according to the tenets of The Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. This includes, among other things, extensive bias training. (*Full report:* <https://bloomington.in.gov/sites/default/files/2018-02/Bloomington%20Police%20Report%20on%20Implementation%20of%20the%2021st%20Century%20Policing%20Report.pdf>). I have also directed our Police Department to pursue (and since earn) national accreditation from CALEA for the first time in community history. This accreditation requires extensive review of policies, training, and protocols, and will

require regular review to assure we are following national best practices for “guardian” (not “warrior”) mentality, anti-bias training, and much more.

When I became Mayor I ordered our patrol cars to eliminate dark tinting on their patrol car windows, which I believe created inappropriate distancing from our community. While there were objections, that has been done now. With the purchase of the replacement armored rescue vehicle to support the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT), I agreed with the City Council about the need for a system of checks and balances for its use. In August of 2018, I supported and the Council passed legislation defining how the CIRT vehicle could be used, so it can only be used defensively as a rescue vehicle.

5. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

I don't know enough about this 311 issue to evaluate -- I look forward to learning more about it. I also welcome views about false reports to the police -- recognizing we want people to provide helpful reports, but we don't want inaccurate or prejudiced false reports.

6. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

I strongly believe that there are tangible and effective solutions for non-violent offenders that focus on education and rehabilitation. As Mayor, I have collaborated with the Prosecutor's office and BPD on how to establish a diversion program for non-violent offenders. *(More info here: <https://bloomington.in.gov/digital-town-halls/expanding-alternatives-in-criminal-justice>)*

7. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

Restorative justice is the opportunity to listen and grow with individuals, instead of

uniform punishment. The key to restorative justice being effective is a genuine commitment to the process from all parties. As previously mentioned, I have collaborated with BPD to establish a diversion program for non-violent offenders. This program provides alternatives to conviction to reduce reincarceration and act as an opportunity for rehabilitation and growth. I have also added a social worker and two neighborhood resource specialists to the police department to help increase restorative justice. (Three new positions, none of them badged officers.)

Vauhxx Booker, City Council At-Large

1. Bloomington has again been listed as having the highest Cost of Living in Indiana. This coupled with the fact that one out of every five residents live in poverty is untenable and unsustainable. Neither the past nor the future of Bloomington lies in being a city of the rich. Affordable housing is not a zero-sum game where every dollar a poor person saves means a dollar taken out of the pocket of those who enjoy financial privilege; this is an investment in our community that, directly or indirectly, raises the quality of life for everyone.

Housing is fundamental. Housing is available. No one should have to go without a roof overhead. Housing is a human right.

Our platform addresses the creation of a Renter's Bill of Rights In order to reduce predatory rental practices in Bloomington, decrease forced evictions, and increase home retention. I'll work to create ordinance to increase availability of housing and diversity of housing types offered for every income range, especially those making below 50% of Bloomington's median income. Though federal laws are intended to prevent racial bias, by increasing density and diversity of our housing supply, creating eviction and and first-time homebuyer's funding we will uplift Black and other marginalized people.

Here is a letter to the editor I submitted to the Indiana Daily Student regarding density.

Open Letter: UDO and density

Bloomington, Indiana is presently experiencing a worsening multigenerational housing crisis that has continued to price out more of our neighbors over the decades. A new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is in draft. The UDO will become a guiding document intended to streamline and coordinate the city's future development for a generation to come. The current UDO iteration imperfectly addresses the need to increase density to ease housing conditions, but it is still in draft form. With calls to increase density many folks are rightfully concerned about maintaining the character of our historic downtown neighborhoods. I agree that neighborhoods shouldn't experience radical changes. To effectively address our housing demands we need to include every neighborhood and utilize smart practices to incrementally add development.

Many folks in Bloomington become uncomfortable when you utter the phrase, “development.” Our city has a history of outside developers creating dense, profit-driven luxury housing that isn’t consistent with our community values, or in the greater interest of public welfare. We need to take back our city from solely profit-driven forces which can too often be predatory. Housing must serve the needs of the many and not just the interests of a few.

The lack of workforce housing or the, “missing middle” hinders our local economy and harms the environment. We can increase density without sacrificing character. I’d like you to imagine a duplex alongside a single-family house. A zoning ordinance could be created with an owner occupancy or other mandates that would favor local small developers.

For example, a family that is a first-time home builder may want to build a duplex to create an additional income source. Since their budget is likely more modest, they will build more modestly than a large developer who wants to maximize profits by building high-end. The homes this family build will naturally be more affordable and accessible to a diverse population. Living on the property motivates the family to care for their home and the neighborhood as a whole. In tandem, we also must work towards creating the expectation that in Bloomington future large developments will have an affordable component. Especially if the developer requires variances to break from current zoning ordinances.

We must understand that land use policy in the United States has resulted in our communities being extensively segregated [by] race and class. With this understanding, we can consciously work towards dismantling the injustices of the past, and building a more equitable future. Building higher density communities is the best solution that is both equitable and climate conscious. We need neighborhoods that are vibrant, walkable, transit-rich, with a multitude of high quality jobs, and housing ranges for all incomes.

2. In Monroe County compared to white peers Black students are 6x more likely to be suspended, 4.3x LESS likely to be enrolled in AP classes, and on average lag 2.2 grades behind. (projects.propublica.org)

Whereas Black students expressly attended a separate elementary school until 1950, now our schools are segregated by class with much the same effects. Since school are funded by property taxes, and Black students are corralled into poor areas less money is spent on Black students compared to their white peers. This resource disparity likely leads to the gap in Black graduation rates and college readiness compared to white students. This translates to lower economic opportunity for Black students into their adult lives. The relationship between crime and poverty is well established.

The correlation would appear apparent.

To follow this out even further, once these Black youths reach the prison system, whites actively benefit from this system of oppression. Most prisons are located near predominately white

communities that reap the rewards. These white communities are not only provided with middle class careers in corrections overseeing the majority Black and poor people populating the prisons, but also receive additional funding for the artificially increased population numbers. Yet even still, many of these workers are coerced to work for nearly slave wages that benefit white owned industry.

The now imprisoned young adults have often been locked away from family and children who are now deprived their support and will enter schools already disadvantaged to repeat the cycle. It's simply slavery evolved.

3. I don't value the term, "privilege". Not because it offends those that have it, but because it fails to express the violence and oppression acted upon those who don't.

Privilege refers to our positionality in relationship to access to dignity, Human Rights, legal standing, and the systems of oppression. Notions of race, class, religion, heteronormative paradigms, gender binaries, and patriarchy. Are all social constructs created to instill division and justify the elevation of certain individuals at the expense of others. Humans should not be stratified, yet we are constantly conditioned to accept the unacceptable as natural occurring phenomenon. Take the notion of race:

Race as we view it today is inherently different from ethnocentrism, which divided groups by the inherent differences perceived between various cultures. Whereas, "whiteness" is an ever evolving notion that isn't based in ethnographic similarities, but has morphed overtime to encompass distinct groups once considered separate to maintain social dominance. i.d. Irish, Italians, ect.

To be direct, race holds no more meaningful distinction in categorizing humans than the differing shades of Labrador Retrievers, but it has been imbued with such significance that we hold it as an objective truth that colors our every perception and interaction.

Privilege is like the air, imperceptible when it's there, agonizing when it's denied.

Awareness of privilege has shaped my life and activism. As a cis gendered male I volunteered with the Kentucky Fairness Alliance to lobby the Kentucky State Legislators to pass an anti bullying bill. I helped to organize a rally in Louisville to hold Trayvon Martin's murderer accountable. In Bloomington as the organizer of BLM I worked with the UU Church to develop Sanctuary policy for undocumented residents. I currently serve as Chair of the County's Affordable Housing Commission working to establish housing as a Human Right.

4. As a private citizen I've worked extensively to be aware of governmental transparency issues and the city budget. I would continue these practices as an elected official with renewed vigor. Being a Black official I would be able to advocate for Black people and other POC from the perspective of someone directly influenced by governmental bias. I'll listen to and work with my fellow officials, nonprofit orgs, and community activists to be an effective check on governmental overstep.

5.

In 1967, at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, Martin Luther King spoke with NBC News. When asked why the negro hasn't gotten a hold in America as every other immigrant group eventually did; King responded, "White America must see that no other ethnic group has been a slave on American soil. That is one thing that other immigrant groups haven't had to face. The other thing is that the color became a stigma. American society made the Negroes color a stigma"

The short answer is racism, which enforces poverty. Poverty is closely related to criminalized behaviors. The foundation of the of jurisprudence in the United States was created with the disenfranchisement of Blacks in mind. It's a notion inscribed unto the very founding documents of our society and culture. Racism created indelible marks upon the fabric of all regions influenced by colonialism. The Founding Fathers penned the words, "all men are created equal" while many literally enslaved people.

The way to bring equity to a justice system created to serve only whites is to move away from funding punitive measures to supports. Similar to Black neighborhoods plagued with substance use being met with, "War on Drugs" policies morphing into a public health crisis when white communities were effected in mass.

Police departments throughout the nation are meeting citizens as hostile enemy combatants, and too often shooting unarmed Black people for the trend to be isolated accidents. We must transition away from paramilitary tactics back to community based policing. If elected I'll work towards the creation of an independent civilian police review board. Separate from the Board of Public Safety, as several other Indiana communities have instituted.

6. Yes, I would support community based interventions such as a #311. Our police officers are not equipped or trained to meet the needs created by state and community divestiture from funding public health and other service interventions.

False reporting is already a crime and should be enforced. Our media is filled with accounts of unarmed Black people killed during encounters with police officers. Utilizing the police to instill unprovoked fear is terrorism no different than the illegal practice of, "swatting" calling 911 with false circumstances in order to have police SWAT teams deployed on innocent unsuspecting individuals. Crimes motivated by the victims belonging to a marginalized group are hate crimes, and should be tried as such.

7. Akin to slavery the industrial prison complex must be abolished. Both similar and intersectional to racism too many would rather believe incarcerated people have a moral character failing rather than convict our flawed injustice system, and recognize that society at large is predicated upon oppressive systems of the past.

Our current racially biased punitive systems not only fail to be rehabilitative, but actively further disenfranchise the incarcerated. Imprisonment degrades the beneficial social supports and

familiar bonds essential to human wellbeing and recovery. The commonly utilized U.S. practice of prolonged isolation is tantamount to torture, and in 2011, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment condemned its use, except in exceptional circumstances and for as short a time as possible, and banned the practice completely for people with mental illnesses and for juveniles.

Tremendous financial strains are placed upon often already impoverished individuals to post bail, cover court costs, and pay exuberant fees for phone calls and commissary items. Children are separated from parents, left with a single parent or family, uprooted from communities, schools, and placed into foster care. These conditions can prohibit true growth and meaningful attempts at reparation. These circumstances reinforce intergenerational poverty and traumas, only truly encouraging people to resort to further criminalized behaviors.

Even after serving lengthy sentences and successfully meeting conditions of release many people are disenfranchised and relegated to 2nd class citizenry. In many states stripped of voting rights, forever barred from receiving financial aid for education, and any federal food and housing assistance. These dynamics further alienate vulnerable populations susceptible to being victims of crime. e.g. undocumented communities, sex workers

The same resources allocated to imprisonment (80\$ Billion in the U.S. Hamiltonproject.org) would be more effectively applied for interventions, supports, reentry, diversion and treatment programs.

For those of us indoctrinated from birth with narratives of crime and punishment being presented as logical corollaries, reimagining a world without prisons seems fantastical if not flatly absurd. However, for the overwhelming majority of human history prisons didn't exist and restorative practices were deeply rooted into indigenous cultures. We must shift our minds and society to a higher understanding that prisons are incompatible with a world that has won the battles of social justice, equity, and freedom.

To fully achieve this world notions of class and disability have been erased. The results of production are equitably distributed. Negative behaviors receive treatment rather than punitive measures. Mental/behavioral health and substance use aren't stigmatized. The barriers to necessities of maintaining healthy productive lives have been removed, and people are liberated to develop talents, skills, and pursue dreams. This is the society over Dr. King's, "Mountain top".

8. I believe that many in our community and society wish to evolve beyond the toxic behaviors modeled to us by generations past. Oppressive notions have been ingrained into our psyches. We must apply conscious efforts to move beyond these beliefs or we risk perpetuating inherited cycles of trauma.

"Accountability is a radical form of love not a form of punishment." Desiree Lynn Adaway

Restoration is about accountability and love to ourselves and for others. It stands as a counterpoint to domineering models of revenge, shame, humiliation, or punitive measures. Love is the essential theme because it connects us to others and allows for a sense of empathy and mutual accountability. Love seeks to liberate rather than control. Love calls us in and allows us to inspect uncomfortable beliefs, behaviors and emotions. Rather than convict love seeks to repair. Rather than react love responds. Every behavior is an attempt to meet a need. Love seeks to meet the need.

The phenomenon of, "canceling" each other must cease. Canceling doesn't facilitate discussion, resolve conflicts, or make our communities safer. Canceling must yield to the rise of justice and restoration. We are all imperfect, but aren't we defined by our past misdeeds. We all hold destructive beliefs and display behaviors that can cause harm.

"Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love." -MLK

I wholeheartedly support two local programs. Middle Way House, and Community Justice and Meditation (CJAM). As an elected official I would first, continue to learn about conflict resolution, intervention, and restorative justice practices from these amazing organizations to inspect myself and continue to evolve. I would promote their presence, implementation of their programming, as well advocate for funding.

Jim Sims, City Council At-Large

1. Bloomington finds itself in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. How will you ensure more affordable housing in spite of city government's mandate to maintain higher housing prices for tax revenue? Do you support density housing with priority to people of color, people making under \$30,000 a year, families with dependents, and people with disabilities? Specifically, please discuss non-student housing.

ANS: I am not aware of a "city mandate" to keep housing prices high for tax revenue and have not heard of such in my City Council role. I support increased housing density in core neighborhoods on a conditional basis (not by right). I think if local government can help facilitate increased housing stock for ALL income levels, including housing programs for lower income levels, then people of color, people with income levels under \$30,000 and people with disabilities can be accommodated and priority focus for the populations you've highlighted

would fall within the affordable housing realm. Regarding “non-student” housing, there is a great need for workforce housing, single family homes and other forms such as townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, etc. The issue may be where these types of housing needs may be built, including the numbers needed for our increasing population and younger professionals, which I think may largely be accommodated through the upcoming Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) with regard to zoning and city corridors where housing development may be directed.

1. Students of color in Bloomington experience disproportionate rates of detention, suspension, and expulsion. Please share with us any knowledge or data you have about suspension and detention rates of students of color in Bloomington. To the best of your knowledge, how does this problem contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline? Would you support a city-based initiative focused on anti-bias training for faculty, staff, and administration at MCCSC?

ANS: When I served on the Commission on the Status of Black Males (I was chair for a period) we directly challenged, and held public forums, to highlight and resolve this unfair and discriminatory practice that disproportionately affected Black, lower socioeconomic and cultural populations. One successful plan for the affected students was instead of being removed totally from the education system, these affected students could continue their academic work in a facility called the Jukebox and manned by MCCSC teachers and staff. We recommended anti-bias and diversity training for MCCSC teachers and administrators hoping to reduce this disparate situation. I support a city supported MCCSC initiative for further updated training in this area. Unfair and disparate suspension and expulsions of students of color can contribute to the school-to-prison population because there is zero academic support when said students are removed from the system. Even if removed from a school – not the entire school system – but allowed to continue their academic work and progress, this can only help reduce the jail and prison pipeline by keeping them involved with academics. When we as a community, especially community of color, refuse to accept these outcomes and consistently petition the MCCSC/RBB school administration and hold them accountable, I believe the disparate numbers can be brought in comparative line with the majority population and/or eliminated.

○ *According to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, “black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students. On average, 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of black students.”* (<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>)

1. How do you define privilege? How has privilege impacted decisions you have made as an elected official, or if you are running for the first time, as an engaged community

member? If you are elected, how will you use your privilege to assist black and brown communities?

ANS: Social privilege is unearned advantages conferred upon the majority population in the U.S. – those who identify as white – and manifests itself through social power structures that is not shared with Black and minority populations. Being only the second Black person to serve on City Council, legislative decisions can be impacted by a lack of understanding of how this can affect Black and minority populations. Examples are being able to shop without fear of being followed or seeking housing that one can afford without considering one's race. These are very real impacts felt by Black and minority populations and I try to remind periodically how privilege can affect legislative decisions we make. In deciding on the purchase of an armored vehicle, as example, you cannot just consider that it is intended to protect public safety officers without considering the perceptions of militarizing our police force or possibilities of it being used against Black and minority populations, which is a fundamental social disconnect. Being a Black person, I don't have privilege, but I try to keep the knowledge and understanding of their privilege with my colleagues at the forefront of our discussions that can be of assistance to Black and Brown community members. Not only do we want a seat at the table, we want the power that comes with that seat.

1. In a "Strong Mayor" state, the Office of the Mayor has very broad administrative authority. If elected, how will you ensure that the checks and balances system is preserved, especially with respect to the budget? If the Mayor's office implements a policy that is potentially harmful to people of color, how will City Council use their authority to curb or stop this policy?

ANS: The Mayor is the executive branch of local government and City Council is the legislative branch. We have checks and balances through the power of the purse, appropriating money. Again, I am not aware of a "policy" that is expressly harmful to people of color. I do know that any administrative requests is vetted by 9 council members (possible approval and funding) and any determination that a Mayoral policy request is harmful to people of color, we have the authority to not approve and/or fund such a request. There are some administrative initiatives that may not have to come before Council, and if deemed harmful by Council members, we can address it with administration and be public with our non-support. I have built respectful relations with the Mayor, city staff and my Council colleagues and I'm comfortable with having dialogue with them to voice my concerns on my view of unfair and harmful initiatives that adversely affect our Black and Brown communities, as well as other minority populations.

1. To the best of your knowledge, describe why people of color are disproportionately targeted and arrested by the criminal justice system. What ideas do you have to make the justice system more equitable and impartial? What concerns do you have about the militarization of our police force? Name a specific issue in our community relating to the militarization of the police and how you have or would respond to it.

ANS: People of color, in my opinion, are disproportionately affected by the criminal justice system due to racist practices and the majority population maintaining social power over these groups/populations. It is also historically institutionalized racist practices that has been difficult and so far impossible to overcome that began with the institution of slavery to maintain social power and control. I think many of my majority population colleagues have an understanding of this and try to consider systemic implications. It is very difficult for those with an inherent “fear of others that are different with the associated distrust” to work toward a true resolution of a system that is larger and more ingrained than themselves. I am part of several social justice/social equity organizations that use public forums, etc., to highlight and discuss the inequity within the criminal justice systems publicly because it’s harder to operate in the dark when public light is brought upon these inequities. My concerns with police force militarization has more to do with training (anti-bias, racial profiling, etc.) than with equipment, weapons, etc. The City has had opportunities to purchase military MRAP vehicles at a surplus price but has refused because of militarization perception concerns and a belief they’re not needed/wanted in our community. I believe my being a community representative voice of these populations that I can, and have, discuss with the Mayor and police leadership community concerns on militarization perceptions and realities.

1. Would you support establishing a 311 number that connected people to emergency services and local organizations trained in handling crisis situations rather than the police? What should be done with individuals who make false reports to the police based on racial profiling or prejudice?

ANS: I can support the notion of 311 but would have questions of operations, personnel, costs, implementation, etc. I support having community resource officers and mental health personnel available as part of the reporting system to deal with emergency crisis non-criminal situations, such as mental health or addiction issues that could be addressed without arrest. People who file false reports (often done from a position of privilege) must be held accountable for their actions be it educational or restorative justice, and with criminal liability as appropriate.

1. Describe a society in which there are no prisons. How does that justice system differ from ours? What other aspects of culture would be different in a society without prisons?

ANS: I'm not sure I can describe such a society. I believe many people are incarcerated who shouldn't be but I also believe there are certain members of our society that should be separated from society. I think a society without prisons could lead to less socialized fear of others and aid to build cultural trust if people were treated justly across the board. I believe our system of punitive actions must be replaced with restorative and rehabilitative approaches.

1. What does restorative justice look like to you? What programs focused on restorative justice do you support or would you support as an elected official? How?

ANS: Restorative justice, as I understand the concept, focuses on rehabilitation of individuals that offend by a process of reconciliation with those victimized and general society/community. I would support a process/program involving resolution and reconciliation with the offender, the community and the victim(s) and I would include that a trained non-biased representative would facilitate such a program. I would expect law enforcement and judicial system by in and support as well. CJAM, as I understand it, is the program I'm aware of that emulates restorative justice (mediation). If we can repair damage and harm and address the reasons that are contributory to the crime between victims and offenders without incarceration, and gain understanding between all involved, then that would be a bridge to success as I under