

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

1 What is your motivation for running for this office?

My motivation for running for city council is for the people and the people only. I care about what they need more so than what I need. Therefore, I will not do anything that will hurt the people in my district as well as the city of Birmingham to include any personal favors or interests, pay-to-play offer, or any type of bribe. I want to be able to sleep at night knowing I made a difference and I won't let down the people that elected me. That is a feeling you cannot buy with all the money in the world.

Furthermore, I don't want to be a councilor just so I can do good works and try to promote myself to pride and arrogance. If you do good works, I say let the people be your advertising. Word of mouth is the greatest marketing tool in the world. Plus, when we do things in secret, God will reward us openly.

2 What is your greatest virtue, especially as applied to stewardship and the law?

The greatest virtue of all is love. Love will allow me to place my interests below the interests of others. Love will allow me to be compassionate, honest, faithful, and hospitable. Love will allow me to see common ground with others, forgive in times of hurt and wrongdoing, and demonstrate the love of Christ in everyday living without quoting a bible verse. If you have love for people through your actions, you are demonstrating the love of God. Then your heart is pure which defines a person as a true servant. Jesus said "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'".

The greatest virtue according to the law is respect. In order to work together, the mayor and the city council must have mutual respect for one another the business of the city to be conducted. Ways we can respect each other are we must have integrity and honesty, putting the people's interest first, and following the law. We must respect the law by having a deep understanding of it, consulting the proper channels to assist us, and enforce the laws that are written. City leaders must allow be examples by following the law. How can we expect the people to follow the law when we break the law?

3 If you currently attend a house of worship, what is the name of it and how often do you attend?

I am currently an Associate Minister at True Light Missionary Baptist Church in Titusville where the pastor is Rev. Stanley Kindall. I attend church regularly on Sunday mornings and any given special event.

4. What impact will your faith have on the performance of the duties of this office?

My faith will have a major impact on performing my duties as city council. Daily, I will ask God for wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to represent the people of my district and the city in a way that is pleasing to Him. When Solomon became king of Israel, he asked God for wisdom to rule the people of the kingdom. I had in the past and will continue to ask God for such wisdom that I will be the servant He has called me to be. It will be an opportunity for me to become a greater blessing to so many people. I see myself as a city councilor as an open door to be a blessing to the masses. In all matters, professional and private, God is my source for strength, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. There isn't a day go by in which I do not need God. I need Him daily. That will not change once I am in office. In fact, I will be like Solomon who leaned on the Lord more so than ever.

5 How will you establish a good working relationship with the elected Mayor to ensure the city's success?

I believe that you must live by example. If you are honest, have integrity, respectful, professional, and faithful, these divine characteristics will overflow to others who see you are successful and they too will want to be the same way. When God gave me the green light to run for office, He told me to show them how it's done. The Lord will continue to equip me to have those listed attributes to show others we can work together in harmony for Birmingham to move forward into the future. One idea I have is for the newly elected mayor and city council to have an informal dinner to iron out differences and find common ground. While in office, the mayor and city council can have informal sessions where we can relax from the pressures of the city and draw strength from each other. Many of your college sports plans these types of activities before, during, and after the season and it work for them. Why can't the mayor and the city council do the same?

6 Suppose the City Council faced a development proposal that meets all the regulations, yet a large number of citizens appeared before the City Council to stop it. How would you vote?

1. If the proposed development is within my district and the people don't want it, I have to side with the people because I value their voice. So I will vote no.
2. If the proposed development is not in my district and the people are fighting to stop it, I will side with the people. I will vote no. We must listen to the people who elect us because they know what is best for their neighborhoods.

7 How would you stay informed about City issues and what the City Council is working on?

I turn to traditional and social media as avenues to stay informed on the issues of the city as well as the city council. If I cannot attend a city council meeting, I can see it online as well as viewing the agenda. I also have a network of friends on social media and people who attending meetings and events who are able to keep informed. If there is a meeting or event that I am able to attend, I will attend in order to stay informed.

8 Have you thought about any legislation you are interested in seeing the City Council enact, repeal or revise? If so, what is it? What would you propose?

1. I would look into the process of condemning and demolishing property because I don't understand why it takes a long time in some neighborhoods vs. a short time in other neighborhoods to tear down abandoned structures. I would keep the process in tact, but place a timeline in which abandoned property be condemned and demolish spells out so everyone will know what to expect and when action will be taken.
2. I would like to involve the state to revise the Mayor-Council Act to insure that all three branches of local government maintain checks and balances for a fair and honest government. The city council cannot interfere in that process, but the mayor and initiate by going before the state legislator.

3. If the city does not have a noise ordinance, then there needs to be such a law. This law will apply to tractor trailer trucks, trains, and cars blasting music in areas where noise is affect near residential neighborhoods. I proposed the times of this law to be in effect from 10 pm to 7 am. If there is a noise ordinance, then the mayor needs to enforce it or it needs to be updated by the city council.

4. There needs to be a curfew enacted for youth and young adults and hold parents accountable for their children's' actions. For youth below 18 years of age, the curfew should be between 8 pm to 7 am unless the child is with a parent or guardian. For young adults ages 18-25, 11 pm to 7 am unless he/she have a job where they work overnight. They will need to provide proof of overnight employment. If this ordinance is broken, a penalty system will be in place for the parents to include a fine, jail time, or both.

5. If there were state laws to control how much time trains can stall on railroad crossings, then the city can create an ordinance based on state law. It must start on the state level and then can the city council pattern a city law to coincide with state law.

9 How will you determine the City's wants v. needs?

The needs of the city should take priority before the wants of the city. First, to discover the needs of the city, I believe the city council should go out into field and speak to the residence in their respective districts. Also certain communities have a framework plan that the people would like for the city to implement. The councilor in this case should follow the wishes of that plan. Second, there needs to be an audit of the budget to determine the needs of the city. If there is any wasteful spending, then that program or project needs to be either be allocated less money or scrapped altogether to provide funds for areas of more priority. Priority needs of the city include investing in education, revitalizing the neighborhoods, crime prevention, road repairs, social programs to fight poverty and homelessness, and economic development. After the city is self attained in keeping up with the needs of the people, then the city can concentrate on the wants.

10 What do you see as Birmingham's major challenges and assets?

Birmingham's major challenges including crime, poverty and homelessness, a broken education system, a broken police department, the deterioration of our neighborhoods, and corruption.

Birmingham's major assets are people and organizations who want to make a difference, the city's historical dominance compared to other cities in America, a revitalize downtown as a patter to improve other neighborhoods, and a flow of money and economic activity that can be used to benefit all citizens.

11 How long have you lived in Birmingham, and how would you characterize the City's quality of life? How should it be improved?

I was born and raised in Birmingham. I am a product of Birmingham City Schools, went to Washington Elementary School and A.H. Parker High School. I lived in the Druid Hill neighborhood during the mid 1970s before moving to the North Titusville neighborhood in the mid 1980s. My visit period as a Birmingham resident was for 25 years (1974-1999) before moving to Virginia (1999-2016) where I became an entrepreneur and founder of a faith based ministry of helps. I returned to Birmingham in November 2016 to serve as a minister and quietly acting as a voice to individuals who feel they don't have a voice.

The quality of life in Birmingham is divided. There are some neighborhoods where the quality of life is superb whereas other neighborhoods are experiencing a low quality of life due to poverty. The city needs to invest money, time, and resources on neighborhoods where poverty exist; communities are deteriorating, and have a lack of opportunities for residents to become positively active and productive. If the city improves the education system, invest in young people, revitalize neighborhoods, encourage economic growth, provide social opportunities for youth and adults, and make sure people are prepared for the job market; you will see a reduction in crime.

12 What distinguishes you from the other candidates?

I am proud to enjoy a career in the customer service industry for over 20 years. During that time, I have always made myself available to serve the people; listening to their concerns and working out issues. I bring listening, problem solving, and conflict resolution skills to the city council. I am a minister, meaning God have placed a special calling in my life to be a servant to the people because He placed the heart of a servant in me by my willingness to serve others. I carry with me a demonstration of integrity, empathy, moral judgment, compassion, and intelligence. In a leadership position at church or in the private sector, I am honest in my dealings, faithful in my work, and know

when to speak up and when to remain silent. The greater the pressure, the calmer I am. I do my best work when I am under stress that is positive in nature. During times of negative stress, I seek God's wisdom and strength to handle a situation or person in a manner that is pleasing to Him.

13 What issue is not getting enough attention?

The revitalization of our neighborhoods is an issue that doesn't receive enough attention. In fact, some neighborhoods look better than others or certain sections of a neighborhood are in decent shape. Downtown and mid-town are like the living room in your house. The city paid so much attention to the living that the other rooms in the house (the neighborhoods) are left dirty and inattentive. Ask yourself, do you want to use a dirty bathroom, cook or eat in a dirty kitchen, or sleep in a junky bedroom? For the most part to impress guess, you need to clean the entire house not just the living room. So the city needs not only to improve the city's center, but to improve all 99 neighborhoods if we are to ever attract people, businesses, and events to come to the city.