

**A.FSCME DISTRICT COUNCIL 47**  
**2023 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**(City Council District and City Council-At-Large)**

**CANDIDATE INFORMATION**

**Candidate Personal Contact Information (Fields marked with asterisks are required)**

Name: Curtis Jones, Jr.  
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**Campaign Contact Information**

Full Name of Campaign Committee: Friends of Curtis Jones, Jr.  
HQ Address: \*n/a  
Campaign Manager Name: Charlita Davis  
Campaign Manager Phone: 267.563.0886  
Campaign Manager E-Mail: runcurtrun4@gmail.com

**Candidacy Information**

What office are you seeking? City Council

If you are running for a district seat, in which district are you running? District 4

Are you the incumbent? \*    Yes X    No \_\_\_    If yes, year first elected:

With which party are you registered? Democratic

Please list union leaders you seek input from when developing your legislative agenda:  
Kathy Scott, Ernest Garrett, Ryan Boyer, Gabe Morgan, Lou Agre, Sam Staten, Jr., Estaban Vega, Jerry Jordan,

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Who are your opponents?

If there is not sufficient space to respond to the following questions, please attach additional sheets to the questionnaire.

**CAMPAIGN**

1. Briefly describe your campaign's path to victory. What issues will you be emphasizing throughout your campaign and why?

My path to victory is the service that I have provided over the past years. Most people will not know what laws I've passed, but will remember the lots we've cleaned, the lights we've fixed and the quality of life we've improved in neighborhoods. Public Safety impacts every aspect of life in the city. It determines where you will live, where you're children go to school, and where you're willing to shop and spend money. We must address gun violence, crime and the sense of public safety in Philadelphia. All roads lead to this issue.

**PHILADELPHIA ECONOMY**

2. Do you support raising the Living Wage requirement of employers that do business with the city from its current rate? What would your approach be to promoting a Living Wage requirement for employers not covered by the Living Wage Ordinance?

As an elected official, I have been consistent in fighting for not a minimum wage but a living wage. Whether it was the workers at the Philadelphia Airport or working for security guards and their right to organize, I understand that this issue impacts every neighborhood.

3. The City requires companies with 10 or more employees to provide paid sick leave. Many states and cities have similar laws with no exemptions. Would you support updating the legislation to put it in line with what other states and cities have passed?

Yes.

**PENSION/RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

4. What is your position on the current cap on annual contribution in the defined benefit plan by employees in the stacked hybrid plan of the Municipal Employee Pension system? Should the cap be indexed to include automatic increases tied to salary increases?

Municipal workers in my district have retired to affordable housing mutl-unit rentals. Only to find after some years that the Area Median Income (AMI) has outpaced their stagnant pensions and they have not

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received the cost-of-living increases to match, which has put some in jeopardy of losing their apartments. I would support COLA increases.

**EDUCATION/SCHOOL BOARD**

5. What qualities and experience would you look for in appointees to the School Board? What standards should School Board appointees use to evaluate current or proposed privatization measures (e.g., charter schools)?

The composition of the school board should reflect the population of Philadelphia in every demographic. They should have attended public schools, have children in public schools, have taught in public schools, etc. A fair apple to apples comparison, which compares schools on a level playing field. I do not understand the current methodology and decision making process for schools being closed or remaining open in my district. In my opinion it tends to be arbitrary and capricious. One standard for all.

6. How would you work to support acquiring fair State funding for the Philadelphia School District? What experience and relationships do you have working with entities in Harrisburg that would help accomplish that?

Our recent court victory to reevaluate the school funding formula is a start. Working with my colleagues in Harrisburg where we are discussing what that would actually look like, considering equal is not equitable. Due to past underfunding of Philadelphia schools, how do we hold harmless other regions of the Commonwealth while doubling down on funding for Philadelphia. Some areas of Pennsylvania have lost student population without losing funding for local school districts. Right sizing the funding could mean doubling student appropriations from \$12,000 to \$26,000 per student.

**CITY SERVICES**

7. What are your priorities for funding City and Court services? How would you ensure that these services are provided equitably throughout the city?

Recent studies for things like municipal services such as trash pick-ups as well as 911 responses have demonstrated the inequity that is almost common place for some neighborhoods. Closer attention to monitoring of service delivery will be a department-by-department review during the upcoming budget process.

8. What level of services should the city support to fully fund and fully staff our Library and Parks and Recreation systems? Please explain your position and how you believe those systems can be funded.

Parks & Recreation and its staff have been victimized by every recent challenge this city has faced - from fair elections to civil unrest to responses to COVID at Recreation Centers. Staff reductions have taxed employees beyond limits. Although we are resuming Saturday hours for Libraries, staffing levels have

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created safety issues for personnel who often are forced to open libraries in an unsafe environment. At the end of the day, we must fund the things we profess to care about.

9. How would you address staffing shortages throughout departments, including those that are a result of unfilled positions? What initiatives would you put in place to help hire and retain current City / Court workers?

I support funding signing bonuses and retention incentives. We must increase wages to be competitive with the private sector. Some of our Civil Service interview and selection processes need to be shortened to address emergency staff shortages within various departments.

10. What is your position on the privatization of City services?

I do not, will not support it. History has shown when people say "the private sector can do it cheaper" inevitably over the long term, it is not true.

**ENVIRONMENT**

11. What steps do you want the city to take to address climate change and to shift away from fossil fuels toward renewable energy sources? Do you support the City amending its investment portfolio to divest from fossil fuel companies?

Electric vehicles incentivized energy conservation and use of solar panels within our Water Department in a mass investment to reduce the cost of water production to the city of Philadelphia. Yes, I support the city divesting from fossil fuel companies.

**TAXES**

12. What measures would you support to make sure that wealthy non-profits pay their fair share to support City and Court services?

Every five years large institutions should voluntarily submit to a pilot review which would evaluate their contribution to Philadelphia and suggest a level of donation given.

13. Would you support any changes to the city's property tax abatement program? If not, please explain why. If so, please explain how?

I would lobby the state to relax the uniformity act in Philadelphia to allow for the tax abatement program to apply to areas of greater need as opposed to greater wealth.

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14. How would you reform city taxes to increase revenue? What is your position on the Net Income and Gross Receipts Tax and on the Wealth Tax legislation? If you have other ideas to increase revenue, please explain them.

**I would reduce the ten year tax abatement to reflect the growth in construction both commercial and residential we are experiencing. I feel we all should pay our fair share and that the wealthiest among us should not get a free ride on the working middle class and poor. Fines and fees are far too low, illegally dumping, and penalties for hit and run to name a few it is time to revisit pilots (payment in lieu of taxes) for a five-year review per institution that is tax exempt.**

**PHILADELPHIA HOUSING**

15. Do you support increasing revenue for the Housing Trust Fund to help residents avoid displacement in communities currently facing development pressure?

**The shrinking stock for affordable housing continues to be an issue for Philadelphia. The Housing Trust Fund financially assist eligible projects that can help in this regard. Yes, I support increasing revenues for the Housing Trust Fund.**

16. As a city elected official, what steps will you take to ensure local government plays a proactive role in expanding permanent affordable and workforce housing in Philadelphia?

**I will fight to increase federal funding from the HUD/Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and I will work with my state partners to ensure increased funding from PHFA. We will look at city acquired land to leverage projects that will benefit the affordable housing inventory in Philadelphia.**

17. Do you support extending good cause eviction protections to all residential leases? Do you support rent control measures to protect Philadelphia tenants?

**As the author of Good Cause Legislation, I support its expansion. I am willing to review proposals that address unaffordable rents in Philadelphia.**

**PHILADELPHIA RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

18. Do you support revising the Memo of Understanding between the Philadelphia Police Department and Philadelphia School District to close the school to prison pipeline? If yes, explain how you would accomplish this. If no, please explain why?

**Yes! if we examine the 48 zipcodes in Philadelphia, 11 of them produce 90% of the inmates on State Road. Within those 11 zip codes, a disproportionate amount of failing schools exist. Conversely, if we fix those schools, we can reduce the number of at-risk youth and reduce the amount of violence and crime in our city.**

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19. Do you support additional funding for programs that are alternatives to incarceration for drug addiction, mental health treatment, and other issues? If yes, how would you measure the effectiveness of those programs? If no, please explain.

**I support Councilmembers Quetcy Lozada, Jim Harrity and Mark Squilla and Sharon Vaughan's resolution to create the Kensington Marshal Plan. We realize we cannot arrest our way out of these problems. We have supported community courts in the past and have to find more cost effective ways to sustain them. Stay tuned for the public hearings on the Kensington Marshal Plan.**

20. What community policing initiatives do you support or propose? Please explain.

**I support more foot patrols, bike patrols with a healthy interaction in sporting and community events, like the Police Athletic League (PAL) and Police Department Advisory Council (PDAC) that meet with the community periodically so that people get to know each other before a community crisis occurs.**

21. What funding and staffing proposals would you support to enhance probation and parole services for Philadelphians under supervised release?

**If there was one department that holds the key to recidivism with positive outcomes it is Probation and Parole. I would increase funding for training for staff as well as provide financial incentives to retain that professionals that we lose to other agencies and departments because we are unwilling to pay competitive salaries.**

22. What funding and staffing proposals would you support for the Department of Prisons to ensure incarcerated citizens are best prepared for return to the community from incarceration or from alternative detention programs?

**Having travelled throughout the city run prison system, I would take a hard look at what the status quo has produced. JEVS for decades has not been challenged to do more and do better. It is time to review that relationship.**

23. What steps do you believe the City can take to reduce the availability of guns in Philadelphia?

**We have passed sensible gun laws, such as Lost and Stolen reporting requirements. We have passed Red Flag Laws, which would remove guns from homes where there is a clear and present danger. As a result, we have been sued by the NRA and are battling these issues in court.**

24. Do you have any plans regarding programs that support and protect victims of crime and other affected members of the community?

**We have increased funding for witness protection and witness relocation programs. We have budgeted and opened the new Office of Victim Advocate. We have advocated for relief of victims**

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**of crime in the areas of crime scene cleaning, burial reimbursements, due to the financial impacts of crimes to survivors. It is not enough but It is more than what we had.**

**PHILADELPHIA CORPORATE POWER**

25. Do you support publicly financed campaigns for all City elected offices? If no, please explain.

**Yes.**

26. Do you support legislation that enables the City to recover subsidies from corporations or other businesses that fail to provide jobs or other benefits to city residents as a condition of the subsidies? Please explain.

**As the former President of the Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation (PCDC) and as a current board member of the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), we must hold business that benefit from our tax dollars accountable to comply with the conditions of the loan agreements.**

**RESIDENCY ISSUE**

27. What is your position on City and Court employees having the option to live outside the city? Please explain.

**I do not support non residency for municipal employees. Each employees serves as a role model to the community, to the youth on their blocks as real heroes that they can achieve and become. They help stabilize entire communities by becoming coaches, mentors, shoppers and consumers. They are the very fabric of many communities.**

28. Are there any other issues you'd like to mention about which we have not asked you in this questionnaire?

**I believe many of the city problems could be solved if we just asked and listen to municipal employees who deal with those issues every day. We should incentivize good ideas that result in improved services as well as cost savings to employees. If you save the city one dollar, you should get ten cents. I support whole heartedly free transportation for city employees. It is good for the work force and its good for SEPTA.**

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