

AFSCME 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: * Councilmember Jamie Gauthier
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Campaign Contact Information

Full Name of Campaign Committee: * Jamie for West Philly
HQ Address: * PO Box 38777, Philadelphia, PA 19104
Campaign Manager Name: * Interim: Matt Goldfine
Campaign Manager Phone: * 267-428-6288
Campaign Manager E-Mail: * cm@jamieforwestphilly.com

Candidacy Information

What office are you seeking? * City Council

If you are running for a district seat, in which district are you running? * 3rd District

Are you the incumbent? * Yes X_ No ___ If yes, year first elected: 2019

With which party are you registered? Democrat

Please list union leaders you seek input from when developing your legislative agenda:

Ryan Boyer: Laborers' District Council and Philadelphia Building Trades
Andi Perez: SEIU 32BJ
Mungu Sanchez: Carpenters

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Jarrett Smith: SEIU Healthcare PA

Who are your opponents?

Jabari Jones is expected to announce a run this Friday.

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?

I have been and will continue to work hard on fundraising. I ended 2022 having raised \$200,000, and with around \$180,000 on hand. I aim to raise significantly more over this primary season through a mix of call time, house parties and larger fundraisers, and support from larger institutional donors like the building trades, municipal, and service unions. Compared to my first campaign four years ago, my re-election campaign will have much more institutional support, including the overwhelming majority of the Democratic wards in the district, unions, and advocacy groups.

Issue I will be discussing include:

-Creating an abundance of safe, quality, accessible housing affordable to people at every range of the income spectrum even in the most desirable, amenity rich areas of the 3rd district. There is large demand for affordable housing in the district with not enough quality affordable housing to satisfy it.

-Working towards a meaningful reduction in gun violence (at least 30% or more) in the next two years. The uptick in violence that we've seen has traumatized whole communities in our city, especially in the 3rd district, and I'd like to see the City take a serious approach to investments in the most impacted people and communities.

-The creation of a robust, at-scale workforce development system that can connect Black/Brown residents to careers in the life sciences. Millions of square feet of lab space and other life sciences-focused real estate have come online in West and Southwest over the past few years. The life sciences companies in these spaces, including biotech and cell and gene therapy, will create thousands of jobs, many of which will be available to those without a college degree, such as lab technicians. We must ensure, however, that the life sciences industry grows alongside, rather than without, the community — because working class, Black and brown residents deserve to be part of this economic boom.

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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?

Yes. I have demonstrated my support of these types of initiatives by supporting the PHL airport prevailing wage ordinance, the formal establishment of the Office of Labor and increasing funding for enforcement to make sure employers are following our labor laws. I would work with workers, unions, community members, and Councilmembers who support expanding the living wage requirement to organize a campaign around a new ordinance expanding the requirement to cover more employers.

Philadelphia is preempted by the state in setting a broad minimum wage law, so I think the main strategy has to include applying pressure to state lawmakers and helping to improve local turnout so that our residents elect state legislators who will support the living wage movement. Beyond that, the City can advocate to the local business community to voluntarily adopt a living wage and appeal to the public to support those that do. I am willing to be a part of any and all efforts in this area.

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 who dedicate their lives to serving the public, in many cases earning less money during their careers than they could in the private sector, deserve to be able to retire comfortably. The current cap on annual contributions in the stacked hybrid plan is unfair to employees because it shifts too much of the risk of the market from the employer to the employee. I am in favor of allowing our municipal workers to continue to contribute to their pensions even as their salary rises. I would refine the appropriate approach through looking at pension projections, but ultimately, if the City continues to contribute budget dollars to the pension fund at such high rates, I think we should be able to support an increase in pension contributions from those in the stacked hybrid plan above the current cap.

EDUCATION/SCHOOL BOARD

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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)?

-Commitment to public schools and not allowing charter schools to drain the resources of our traditional district schools.

-Diverse perspective, parents and former students from a variety of district schools should receive appointments, not just those from magnet schools.

-I think it is important to have appointees that bring a variety of skills and experiences including things that are generally sought in board leadership like organizational management and budgeting, but also those not aggressively sought like organizing and community engagement.

-I think current charters should be evaluated on quality and performance, and in a way that does not unfairly disadvantage district schools. For instance, it is unfair to measure charters that 'cherry pick' students and expel students who don't conform to extreme behavior and academic achievement guidelines, with the same yardstick used for district schools that not only have far less choice in serving students with high needs, but readily accept the challenge.

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?

I would collaborate with our Democratic State officials in any way they thought would be helpful. Majority Leader Joanna McClinton and Senator Vincent Hughes each represent portions of the 3rd district and I work very closely with them on all things, especially when it comes to our public schools. I also have a good relationship with Governor Shapiro.

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?

My #JustServicesPHL FY23 budget campaign earned \$30 million over the Mayor's initial proposed budget for city services including traffic calming, clamping down on illegal dumping, cleaning up vacant lots, fixing broken street lights, and more, and further called for these investments to be made first and foremost in areas disproportionately impacted by gun violence. Research has shown that the targeting of interventions like cleaning, greening, and blight remediation, if targeted appropriately can decrease gun violence by up to 30% in affected areas. In this way, investment in basic city services equals investment in our residents' safety and wellbeing.

I would push for full funding for additional court personnel— we can not overburden our current staff. Additionally, I think that courts feel inaccessible, at times, to everyday people. I would like to see more investment in helping people understand how the courts work, and in making courts feel more open and welcoming. One example of this could be offering childcare. I've heard of judges not allowing children in

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landlord/tenant court, however many people facing eviction are single moms.

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.

The City absolutely should fully fund and fully staff our Library and Parks and Recreation systems. Crucial repairs should be made to facilities to ensure they are not just safe, but modern, welcoming spaces that our families want to use. I would like to get to a point where more and eventually all libraries and rec centers are open on weekends and some evenings.

I support Councilmember Brooks' Philly Wealth Tax bill which could bring in over \$200M every year to better fund libraries, parks, and other important priorities. Even without a new tax though, I think that Parks and Rec and Libraries should constitute a larger part of the City's annual budget given their importance to neighborhoods.

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?

The City's workforce is facing an unprecedented crisis as it relates to vacancies and turnover. We need to invest more in HR professionals so that we have an HR department that is robust enough to hire at the pace we need. We need to hear from our workers on what supports they need and try to address them. I went through this process with L&I inspectors in the last budget. I gathered data through conversation on why there is a lot of attrition among inspectors, and was able to identify low salary, not enough training, and lack of city provided vehicles as three major reasons for inspectors leaving. In the budget process, I fought for and won city vehicles for many L&I inspectors. We need to take this approach Citywide.

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

I am strongly against the privatization of City services.

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?

I will support more initiatives that can lower the cost of solar and other renewable energy sources like Solarize Philly. Additionally, I will push the City to lead the way and model good behavior through the retrofit of its own buildings.

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I support the City amending its investment portfolio to divest from fossil fuel companies. It is not just the right thing to do, but a sound financial move as renewal companies are beginning to and will continue to outperform 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?

I am in favor of PILOTS for large, wealthy nonprofits.

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 have mostly been in favor of abolishing the 10-year tax abatement, but with rising construction prices, I would consider reforming the abatement to only support the construction of deeply affordable housing.

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.

As noted above, I support Councilmember Brooks' Philly Wealth Tax bill which could bring in over \$200M every year. We need to invest more in tax enforcement to make sure big businesses and out of town businesses that do work in Philadelphia actually pay the taxes they owe. Ultimately, I think we will naturally grow our tax base overtime by continuing to improve the quality of education and life in our City, attracting jobs and providing higher paying wages to our residents.

PHILADELPHIA HOUSING

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

Yes.

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?

On the housing front, I have advanced several policies during my first term in office:

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- Mixed Income Neighborhood Overlay: In 2021, along with Councilmember Maria Quinones Sanchez, I created and pushed forward the City's first mandatory inclusionary zoning law, which requires at least 20% units in any development (rental or homeownership) be deeply affordable. The City began enforcing this law in July 2022.
- Affordable Housing Preservation Overlay: AHPOD aims to encourage affordable housing in desirable neighborhoods in West Philadelphia. The overlay includes the University City Townhomes at 40th and Market Streets – which are in danger of being lost to commercial development – along with neighboring locations in the 3rd District where low-income residents could be especially vulnerable to displacement without additional policy interventions. AHPOD implements a 12-month demolition ban on properties in the overlay, while also requiring a significant level of affordable housing in any future development.
- Public Land for Public Benefit Bill: The Public Land for Public Benefit bill creates a pathway in the 3rd and 4th Councilmanic districts for community-controlled, permanently affordable housing and urban gardens on City-owned land. Community Land Trusts will receive additional scoring on unsolicited applications for City vacant land and can opt into a multi-year lease to allow more time for fundraising and community engagement while getting the land into community stewardship more quickly.
- People's Preservation Platform (introduced, but not yet passed): The People's Preservation Package:
 - Requires property owners to give notice of their intention to sell their affordable housing property to other affordable housing developers and community groups.
 - Requires property owners give other affordable housing providers the opportunity to buy an expiring affordable housing development.
 - Authorizes the City of Philadelphia to create a directory of all affordable housing properties in Philadelphia, their funding stream, and when their funding expires.
 - Authorizes the Committee on Housing, Neighborhood Development, and the Homeless to conduct hearings regarding discrimination against households holding tenant-based vouchers.

In my next term, I plan to continue my work in this area. My goals will include passing the People's Preservation Package, cracking down on section 8 voucher discrimination, the creation of more affordable homeownership units in my district, continued change to the City's land disposition processes to empower community land trusts, and helping the City to create a more equitable property tax assessment and relief system.

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

Yes, and yes.

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?

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Yes. Schools should not feel like prisons. I would accomplish this through engaging in conversations with community stakeholders, the school board, other elected officials and the police, in order to encourage the school district and police department to revise the memorandum.

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.

Yes. I would measure program effectiveness by looking at data like increases in enrollment in programs and program completion rates, and look for decreases in negative outcomes like overdoses/deaths from overdoses, hospital admission rates, emergency calls related to overdoses, and mental health related incidents.

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

- Hire police more familiar with/from our communities; more community-oriented policing.
- Limit police interactions with vulnerable populations (see Driving Equality, CM Thomas, and Mobile Crisis Units, myself, CMs Gym and Brooks).
- Create a separate class of community workers/ambassadors for current PPD functions that would be better placed with civilians: parking enforcement, mediation among community members, interfacing with citizens experiencing mental health difficulties, interfacing with homeless individuals, etc.

It is worth noting however, that ultimately, it is massive investments in people and neighborhood services and assets that will make our City safer.

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

Our returning citizens need more support when it comes to job training and securing jobs and healing trauma. I would support expanded incentives for employers that hire returning citizens, and advocate for additional staff to provide counseling and social services for those on probation and parole. Additionally, I would like to pilot and grow successful programs from other cities which have successfully helped returning citizens secure and sustain meaningful work.

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?

Much more robust funding for housing, job placement, and mental health services, with appropriate staffing to match.

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

We need to work hand in hand with our State legislators and the Governor's office to collaborate on the best ways to reduce the availability of guns in Philadelphia. There is little way to reduce the guns on our streets without better strategic coordination with our State partners.

Over recent years, the city has made multiple attempts to enact legislation, only to be thwarted by Republicans in Harrisburg who have preempted our ability to govern ourselves in Philadelphia. Governor Shapiro is committed to reducing the number of guns in the City, and I think he will be supportive in helping us to find creative new pathways to make progress.

I am always open and will be fully supportive of trying new ways to empower the City to self-govern without Republicans in Harrisburg telling us how we can and can't protect our citizens. I want to work with advocates and legal experts to develop new ideas on ways that we might be able to address gun violence without the State preempting.

In the meantime, I also think we can be more creative about gun buyback programs.

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

I would like to see us put more funding into trauma and counseling services as well as relocation services. I have been active on Council in pushing more resources into these areas.

PHILADELPHIA CORPORATE POWER

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

Yes, as long as we would also be able to regulate independent expenditure spending. It would be a dangerous scenario for a balanced democracy if candidates were capped on spending on campaign communications but other spending on campaign communications would continue without restrictions; nothing would stop billionaires and harmful corporations from drowning out the voice of the people.

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.

Yes. If corporations or other businesses receive public subsidies with the promise of jobs, we should hold them accountable. The shareholders and owners of these businesses run their companies on the same principals when they make investments: if profits are not generated for shareholders and owners, those at fault are held accountable. If the government makes investment in projects, there should be consequences if they do not deliver on what they promised.

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Also, generally, I think we should drastically reduce the number of subsidies we give to corporations or other businesses. I think we can see much higher returns on investment by using those government dollars to invest in the direct success of our communities via better schools, improved City services, building affordable housing, and much more.

RESIDENCY ISSUE

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

Generally I am supportive of City and Court employees needing to live in the City, but I think this rule also has to be fair and consistent across the workforce.

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

I want to work in my second term to expand the ability for more workers to join unions, in the public and private sectors. Our communities thrive when families are supported by strong unions, and Black and brown communities have the best opportunity to succeed when more of us are union strong. There is a new energy in union organizing that we have not seen in decades, and I want City Council to do what it can to bring the power of unions to support more working families in Philadelphia.

Rev. 12/22