

2020

WASHTENAW COUNTY CANDIDATE SURVEY

RESPONSE REPORT



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2020 CANDIDATE SURVEY

The Washtenaw Health Initiative, the Washtenaw Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Washtenaw Housing Alliance, Avalon Housing, the Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living, Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County, and the Women's Center of SE Michigan have partnered together to create this survey.

Collaboratively, we have developed a short list of questions that our organizations feel are important to Washtenaw County residents.

This survey was sent to fifty-nine candidates running for election in Washtenaw County and listed by the Washtenaw County Clerk. We surveyed all candidates for national, state, and county offices which affected Washtenaw County.

For practical reasons which we will address in future candidate surveys, we surveyed some local races in Ann Arbor City, Ypsilanti City and Ypsilanti Township. (Other local races including school board races were not surveyed.) Future candidate surveys will attempt to be more inclusive of local elections.

We believe that this process for candidate surveys should be continued for future elections especially given the dire health, social and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the intense interest in electoral politics.

In the following report, you will see survey responses from ALL candidates that responded. All responses are exactly how candidates submitted their responses without any editing. In races where no candidates responded, the race is excluded from this report.

Finally, we sincerely thank publicly all of the candidates who responded to this survey. Their answers showed a remarkable degree of attention and care. We also want to thank them for their public service and willingness to engage in our deliberative democracy.



For any questions regarding this survey or the reported responses, please contact Matt Hill at hillmat@med.umich.edu

HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

Here are some comments we have received from people who have read these statements. Please add your comments and suggestions by contacting office@namiwc.org.

- "Even though I already voted, this made me feel more confident about my vote."
- "This year there's so much on the ballot. These responses connect me to the candidates, makes them real and not just a name."
- "Even when I don't agree with a candidate, I appreciated reading the responses and how carefully some responses were written."

Here are some ways to use this report:

- 1) This document is searchable which allows you to find all the occurrences of a given word or phrase. E.g. you can search by words like bail, court, faith, disability, race or education.
- 2) The document is organized by candidate. Read the statements and reach out to the candidates in a letter, call, text or email:
 - a) Express your support for (or ask them to clarify) their positions.
 - b) Explain your interests and ask the candidate to support your group publicly.
 - c) Find ways to use their expressions to build a relationship, even if you disagree.
 - d) Ask the candidate what next steps you should take as an advocate. Some questions ask their general positions, but many questions ask how a candidate's office will affect a policy area. Either way, you can ask the candidate to suggest how they might pursue these interests.
 - e) Ask the candidate how to build a consensus in elected groups for policies you seek to enact. Most candidates will sit with deliberative groups which require them to build a consensus with the other members.
- 3) Give these statements to others, discuss the issues and urge them to do these things.



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Ann Arbor City Council

Ward 1 Candidates

Lisa Disch
(No Challenger)

Lisa Disch

Democratic Candidate for Ann Arbor City Council, Ward 1

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

Ward One is diverse. Campaigning this summer, I reached out to all residents and plan to keep doing that. High housing costs are a key contributor to these disparities because they leave those who have been excluded from the legal and social paths to wealth accumulation with little to fall back on in a crisis. I am working to support the affordable housing millage and will ensure that it is used efficiently and effectively to help the most vulnerable.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

My understanding is that the City of Ann Arbor pays additional money into County Mental Health, over and above what we contribute through the millage. The millage rebate monies were not earmarked for mental health or public safety. I support Ann Arbor's decision to put that rebate toward what were, at the time, sorely underfunded priorities: climate change mitigation, affordable housing, and pedestrian safety.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

As I said, I am working now to raise constituent awareness of and support for the affordable housing millage. I will ensure that those monies (hoping it passes) are used efficiently and effectively to help the most vulnerable.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

I strongly support information gathering around racial bias in policing, charging, and sentencing. I strongly support diversionary justice, which I would like to see used more frequently where it is currently available at the district court level and implemented where it can be effective at the circuit court level. I would like to see reform of cash bail which disproportionately burdens low-income people.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

I would like to hear more from AAPS how City Council can be helpful here. Municipal broadband or hot spots for students might be one thing that City government is uniquely able to contribute.

Ward 3 Candidates

Travis Radina
(No Challenger)

Travis Radina
Democratic Candidate for Ann Arbor City Council, Ward 3

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

As I've said throughout the course of my campaign, representation matters. Once elected, I will become the only openly-LGBTQ member of City Council, but I am extremely aware that there will still be no Black council members, and just a couple council members of color. Especially in lieu of elected representation on Council, city government must be incredibly intentional in efforts to engage BIPOC residents in developing solutions, not just to address the health disparities exacerbated by COVID-19, but also in overcoming many other local challenges, as well.

The reality is that it requires a significant amount of privilege to stay actively engaged with city government. The challenges many of us are experiencing for the first time during this pandemic are challenges that others have every day when trying to interact with our government. Those who are the most vulnerable often don't have the luxury of participating -- between working (sometimes multiple jobs), taking care of kids, not having access to the internet, or being physically unable to attend a meeting, it can be too hard.

If elected, I will host regular coffee hours, continue to communicate with residents through email and social media, and -- most importantly -- will continue to show up throughout the community to meet residents where they are, rather than expecting them to come to me.

Further, we must acknowledge that while Ann Arbor, as a whole, is one of the most highly educated, healthy and economically prosperous cities in Michigan, communities of color have not always shared in the distribution of wealth, access to healthcare, educational attainment, and job growth. Our region is one of the worst in the nation in economic segregation and income inequality. We have dramatic disparities in life expectancy between white residents and residents of color. There is a dramatic literacy gap between white students and African American students. And a majority

of African Americans in the county live in low-opportunity areas with limited job growth.

This can be directly attributed to systemic inequities in both policy and decision-making. If Ann Arbor residents value diversity, we must invest in equity. I will fully support the "One Community" equity initiative, which was launched jointly by the city and county in 2018, and will work with staff to develop and enact a plan to incorporate equity in community services, programs, hiring practices, service delivery model and interactions with the public and community partners.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

As a municipality that provides independent public safety services, Ann Arbor receives a rebate for the "public safety" portion of 2017 millage. It does not receive a rebate for the mental health portion of the millage, as those services are provided at the county-level.

At the time -- in effort to support passage of the millage -- Ann Arbor made a public promise to residents that, if passed, the city would commit those rebate dollars to Affordable Housing, Climate Action and Pedestrian Safety. I do not believe that we should break this promise to the public.

I also do not believe that now is the time to throw more money into traditional "public safety" models.

The reality, however, is that there is a clear intersection of mental health issues and public safety. Often, police officers are the first on the scene during a mental health crisis. That is why I have called for Ann Arbor to become a progressive leader in public safety, to reimagine local policing to include more social workers, mental health professionals, and unarmed public safety officers. This must also include regular evaluation of use-of-force policies, bias training, and independent oversight, and we must ensure that all AAPD officers and staff receive expanded bias and de-escalation training to better interact and communicate with all members of our diverse neighborhoods.

While the goal should, obviously, be to address mental health issues in a way that limits intervention from the criminal justice system, I will also continue to make Ann Arbor's funding of the 15th District Court dependent on continuation and expansion, as needed, of the Mental Health Court, to ensure that residents who do enter the criminal justice system ultimately have access to the support and resources necessary to be diverted into judicially supervised, community-based treatment to address the underlying problems, rather than being sent to jail.

I would also like to further -- and engage our local health professionals -- to explore the viability, effectiveness, and safety of Supervised Injection Sites, to help save lives and provide resources to overcome substance abuse.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

This is an issue that is personal to me, and one that I understand firsthand. While I was lucky to find and buy a home in 2017, my sister -- a foster care social worker -- simply cannot afford to live in Ann Arbor on her salary alone.

It is unacceptable that so many hardworking people come to Ann Arbor for work, but are forced to leave at the end of each day to live, raise a family, pay taxes, and retire elsewhere. In addition to endorsing Ann Arbor Proposal C, which would provide a more dedicated source of funding for truly affordable housing in Ann Arbor, I have called for a more comprehensive approach to Housing issues in Ann Arbor. This includes:

- Incentivizing inclusionary zoning practices that encourage a share of all new construction projects to be affordable for people with low and moderate incomes, and advocating for changes to state law which would empower Ann Arbor to make Inclusionary Zoning standard practice.
- Insisting that all new projects are mixed-use, mixed-income and carbon-neutral whenever possible to address our housing crisis, while also confronting the global climate emergency and fulfilling our city's pledge of carbon neutrality by 2030.
- Incentivizing innovative and affordable rental alternatives, like accessory housing, tiny homes, and cooperative communities.
- Focusing new housing and development along major transit corridors with reliable and accessible public transportation options, and easy access to amenities and services.
- Ensuring that longtime Ann Arbor residents have the ability to age in place, without being priced out of their homes and forced out of their community simply because they retire or have a fixed income.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

Ann Arbor is a safe community in large part because of the professional local police and firefighters who put on their uniforms each day to serve and protect our community, but we must strive to ensure that all of our city's residents feel protected.

To achieve this, we must fundamentally change our approach to policing and public safety. Here at home, and across the country, we have witnessed tragic examples of excessive use of force by police -- but we know these problems are not new. Due to social media, we're seeing more and more incidents of police brutality, but this has been the lived reality for our black and brown neighbors for far too long.

Accountability & oversight are critical components to strengthening public trust in our police department and ensuring that residents and visitors feel comfortable and safe during interactions with our officers. Our community, like others across the country, is currently grappling with how we can be better. As your next Ward 3 Council Member, I am committed to listening to our residents about their concerns and working toward systemic changes that make Ann Arbor safer for all of our residents.

- Become a leader in progressive police policies, which must include regular evaluation of use-of-force policies, bias training, and independent oversight.
- Ensure that all AAPD officers and staff receive expanded bias and de-escalation training to better interact and communicate with all members of our diverse neighborhoods.
- Remove barriers for an appropriately-funded Independent Community Police Oversight Commission (ICPOC) to launch comprehensive, independent investigations of any incident of abuse, misconduct or impropriety, and make recommendations for policy change and accountability.
- Regularly review use-of-force policy and ensure that Campaign Zero's #8CantWait policies are implemented and followed to prioritize harm reduction.
- Focus funding on public services which are proven to reduce interactions with law enforcement rather than on traditional, punitive policing.
- Revisit/Repeal local laws that have a known racial bias.
- Reimagine local policing to include more social workers, mental health professionals, and unarmed public safety officers.
- Support improved community-police relations to rebuild trust.
- Remain committed to Ann Arbor's policy against cooperating with the federal government on immigration enforcement.
- Improve recruitment practices to encourage more members of our police and fire departments to be from Ann Arbor, reflect the diversity of our community, and live in the neighborhoods they serve.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Many residents are unaware that over 50% of their property taxes are allocated to education. This makes our local elections for school board and WCC Board of

Trustees critically important. As local districts are relying more heavily on remote learning, I will strive to partner with these independently-elected local leaders to ensure that we're collaborating to keep students connected to the resources and support services that they need, deserve and that local tax dollars are funding.

Circuit Court Judgeships

22nd Circuit Court Candidates

Nick Roumel
Tracy Van den Bergh

Nick Roumel

Non-Partisan Candidate for Circuit Court Judge, 22nd Circuit Court

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

I believe in Community Integrated Prevention. There must be a collaborative process among governmental entities (local, state, and federal), NGOs, and health professionals, to craft a comprehensive, long term plan with realistic benchmarks, objective evaluative criteria, and transparent reporting of outcomes. If elected judge, I would lend my ears and my voice to this process. I would also be mindful of the court's role in identifying marginalized litigants for inclusion in these community-wide efforts and to direct them to resources for intervention.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

This is an extremely complex conundrum! On one hand, voters were led to believe that the millage would be used for direct mental health services. It is important that we be transparent when promoting taxation initiatives; otherwise voters' faith in our process will be eroded. Governmental entities deciding on the allocation of the millage have to be mindful of this dynamic. On the other hand, I do not doubt that governmental entities are acting in good faith when they connect the mental health and substance abuse crisis to broader global issues such as climate change. In the final analysis, we have to be true to the promises of the millage campaign as we allocate these funds.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

This is an issue near and dear to me. Forty years ago, I co-organized a national affordable housing conference right here in Washtenaw County. I spent many years after that representing low-income tenants in Wayne and Washtenaw Counties and watched helplessly as local governments failed to effectively control the affordable housing crisis. As a lawyer, I am well aware that life crises often cause housing instability; as a judge, I will be mindful of that and ensure (for example, in domestic relations cases) that family transitions will prioritize the housing needs of the adult parties and child non-parties.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

We cannot ignore what is happening nationally. As we discuss police reform, we must also reimagine our judicial system. Courtrooms look much as they did 100 years ago. We should question our methods, and if they don't make sense, work together for reform.

Courts are too often a barrier to justice for people of color, those with mental health issues, and litigants without means. We must ensure that judges, staff, attorneys, and juries treat people fairly. We can partner with universities to study outcomes, and share those results publicly. We must be vigilant against bias, and streamline cases to make them less cumbersome.

Judges must have the experience, demeanor, and desire to get from behind the bench to sit with the parties, roll up their sleeves, and help resolve cases. Peacekeeping, restorative justice, and other forms of alternative dispute can also be valuable tools to help parties find their own justice.

In criminal cases, I am mindful that cash bail and other onerous conditions of pretrial release (and post-sentencing probation) can work hardships on marginalized defendants and their families. If elected judge, I would not order cash bail or other financially burdensome pretrial obligations except as strictly required by law to prevent flight or protect specific named persons who may be facing harm. I would reserve incarceration for the truly dangerous. I strongly believe in second chances, re-entry support, and "clean slate" options for those hampered by criminal records. Having written and trained on expungement and criminal record issues, I am well versed on the law and aware of the work that must still be done to broaden expungement possibilities not just in employment, but for housing, loans, immigration, and other aspects of civil life. I would always keep these issues in mind whenever a criminal defendant may be before me.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

As a former Ann Arbor School Board Trustee, child psychology researcher and pre-school advocate, I know there are educational challenges even in the best of times. Even those with means are having difficulties balancing parents' work life with child care, schooling, and other aspects of raising a family.

To ensure that students are engaged academically, socially, and emotionally, we must first address the broader issues of stable housing and family health, with the Community Intervention principles I discussed above. We must address the digital divide. School districts can strategize ways for technology staff, teachers, and support personnel to make socially appropriate school visits, perhaps in partnership with other governmental entities, NGOs and health professionals.

If elected judge, I would be sure to keep children foremost in my consideration when helping families transition in divorce and custody matters, use the powers of my office to require conditions that would optimize their housing security, emotional stability, and ability to learn, and guide parents to community resources for support as necessary.

Tracy Van den Bergh

Non-Partisan Candidate for Circuit Court Judge, 22nd Circuit Court

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

My goal as circuit court judge is to improve access to justice in Washtenaw County. Health disparities make it difficult for many community members to attend to legal problems and systemic discrimination often exacerbates these issues for BIPOC. As a former clinical social worker and legal aid provider, I have helped hundreds of clients both here in Washtenaw County, as well as in Jamaica Queens and Brooklyn, fight for fair access to healthcare. I am familiar with the barriers and will ensure that staff in my courtroom support access by regularly attending meetings in under-resourced communities and by offering support referrals to community members navigating in court proceedings. My Masters in Social Work will allow me to immediately bring social work interns into the courthouse. This is a family law seat and families encountering divorce and custody issues must also address healthcare access. We

must insure that families have access to healthcare and are aware of community resources that can assist in overcoming barriers.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

Although circuit court judges would not have power over how local governments choose to allocate the relevant rebates, I do believe that rebated funds should be used to increase mental health and substance abuse services. These services are severely underfunded. Our community should prioritize and support restorative services that provide tools for people to receive appropriate treatment. We cannot continue to rely on the criminal justice to attend these problems. It does not work and, in many ways, is more costly than simply allocating funds to ensure that appropriate treatment services are available.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

Circuit court judges would not have direct power of affordable housing issues. However, as a legal aid attorney, I represented over 1,000 low-income under-resourced Washtenaw County residents over an eight year period. Many of my clients were in eviction proceedings or fighting to maintain a housing voucher. I will continue to advocate for fair access to housing in our community. If elected, I will be handling a family law docket. Housing affordability issues are major issues of contention in divorce proceedings. I will make sure that my courtroom offers referral services to all litigants and make sure that policymakers are aware of how housing access impacts community members. We want to be a community that welcomes all families. If only the most privileged can afford housing, then we are not living up to our own ideal of being a welcoming community.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

Disparities exist in our court system and we must work to ensure that everyone has fair access to justice. Racial disparities in the criminal justice system are a serious problem and we must come together as a community to combat them. I am grateful that the CREWS study revealed the disparities. Although I will be handling a family law docket, if elected, I know that the racial disparities exist beyond the criminal docket. I plan to confront these issues head-on. While most of my plans focus on the family law docket, others extend to the entire court, including the criminal dockets. My plans include: (1) In coordination with Chief Justice Carol Kuhnke, establishing a Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment court, designed to address underlying

issues and reduce recidivism; (2) Establishing child support specialty court services designed to provide immediate employment support, reduce support arrears, and help stabilize families; (3) Introduction and supervision of social work interns to provide treatment court services to those in need of additional support; (4) Providing trauma-informed court services to ensure that children and survivors of domestic violence and trauma have fair and safe access to justice; (5) Providing bias awareness trainings to courtroom staff, and advocating for oversight, regular evaluations, and transparency of all dockets to stop systemic discrimination.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Ensuring that children have much-needed access to social and emotional support services is a huge priority for me. If elected, I will handle a domestic law docket where judges are often relied upon to intervene where parents cannot agree or the state believes that a parent is not providing appropriate support for a child. What I often find is that parents lack resources, support, or are struggling to juggle the many complexities that follow children with higher needs. Helping get to the core of the problem and supporting, instead of wearing down, parents will be vital. Most importantly, however, I will work hard to protect children.

District Court Judgeships

14B District Court Candidates

Mark Nelson (Did Not Respond)

Erane Washington

Erane Washington

Non-Partisan Candidate for District Court Judge, 14B District Court

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

If elected, I would continue being engaged and accessible to the Black, Indigenous and other people of color just as I am now. It is important that judges maintain relationships with everyone in the community and I have proven my dedication to all, including those who are marginalized through my work representing the underserved. I have been developing relationships with many of the partners of this survey in order to ensure that BIPOC can have access to these resources. Health and mental health concerns have been at the forefront of my campaign since day one and huge part of why I am running for 14B District Court Judge. The disparity is great and it is time for someone who understands these issues to have an opportunity to make a difference in these areas. I have been instrumental in helping NAMI to have a presence on the Eastern side of the County. I have held events in my home for people to understand the "missing" with substance use treatments. I will continue to have programming around health, substance use and mental health. I will also provide justice involved friendly employers fairs within the courthouse in order for those in need to be able to secure employment. Employment provides health insurance which helps to reduce the disparities.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

It is my position that the rebated funds should be used for mental health and substance use disorder in the communities. Covid-19 has only exacerbated the need for both mental health and substance use services with people have increased crisis in both. These issues affect the public safety. People who have these issues can

become a danger to themselves and others. The rate of domestic violence increases dramatically if these issues are unaddressed. It is crucial to use the funding directly back into the community to take some preventative measures and crisis assistance.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

Housing is an extremely crucial issue and although a judgeship does not champion for housing in an official capacity, as an individual that sits on the Board for Habitat for Humanity I am acutely aware of the need for affordable housing. I will in my personal capacity, champion for affordable and accessible housing in Washtenaw County with my connections to elected officials at both the local and state-wide level. I will continue to educate the general public on ways in which they can be champions and I will continue to serve on boards which can make a difference in these areas.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

I absolutely believe that criminal justice reform is necessary. It is also one of the platforms upon which I am running. We need a system that is about restorative justice and treats all people fairly. I will expand restorative justice options in the court to include more individuals and more types of cases. It is a viable option for many criminal matters and civil matters. The outcomes in cases should be case specific and not cookie-cutter. I will provide options and resolutions that get to the root cause of issues through restorative justice, transparency and relationship building.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

A judgeship does not really ensure these types of services; however, as an individual I am acutely aware that these issues are crucial. I can direct those in need when they come before the court to the services which are available, especially when it comes to bridging the technology divide.

State Representatives

53rd District Candidates

Jean Holland

Yousef Rabhi (Did Not Respond)

Jean Holland

Republican Candidate for State Representative, 53rd District

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

No one should be denied health care for any reason. The doors of health care should be open to all. If a person cannot afford treatment, then that's where charity and government assistance should be applied. This is opposed to the notion that everyone needs health insurance. What everyone needs is health care. If we focus on treating those who need the care, then the cost will be greatly reduced.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

These funds should be allocated according to the demand. The allocation should be driven from the people in need as opposed to a top down approach. If the funds were designated for mental health and public safety then that's where they belong and should be used according to the needs of the community.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

There is no such thing as affordable housing in the city of Ann Arbor and the pittance of "affordable" units that builders plan and build to appease the City are unrealistic. True affordability can be achieved in the areas outside of the city. Better housing at a lower cost can be built by the local governments (including the City of Ann Arbor) to provide low to moderate cost housing for folks who cannot afford city living. A subsidy to private companies can supplement public transportation to these new communities instead of relying on the expansion of the current public transportation systems. By setting up "on demand" transportation you keep costs down.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

The law should be applied to all citizens equally, regardless of race, creed, status, ethnic background, sexual preference or any other differentiation that can be imagined. As soon as you start treating people different for any of these attributes, you violate a basic tenet that all beings are created equal. Either we are equal or not (on the inside). If people are not being treated equal under the law then that needs to be addressed accordingly, without assigning preferences, for any reason. What happened to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's desire that all be judged by their character and not the color of their skin. We do not need reform to the law. We need equal application of the law and severe punishment if found that the law has not been applied equally.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Schools should be open. All the science points to a very low risk for school aged children. Keeping them home is damaging them to a greater degree than the threat of COVID-19. That being said, our current government is forcing them to stay home. I suggest that neighborhoods work together to make sure that their children can interact and socialize in a way that is agreeable to the locality. Children need this as part of their life experience. We should not take it away from them.

54th District Candidates
Martin Church
Ronnie Peterson (Did Not Respond)

Martin Church
Republican Candidate for State Representative, 54th District

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

First stop the built in Race baiting. Work with local Faith communities to develop health and Fitness programs. All people have health problems it knows no Race or Ethnic origins. it begins with education and fitness. In many cases our attempt to cure the problem is the source of the problem.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

return these funds to the property owners who paid these excessive fees. Our mental Health issues begin with a healthy Spiritual person. That means we need to engage our faith centers first.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

Work with our faith partners to figure out what the person really needs. For many I have talked to they want to live outside of what we call normal. But when the faith community comes in they are able to deal with the real issues.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

where it makes sense yes. in other cases we need stronger police presence. I have been Robbed three times at gun point and I have been attacked numerous times. Lets not forget the victims. The criminal gets all of these special treatments and we get nothing but the bill.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Lets get the parents and the children involved with the local Faith centers. As a victim of the mental health advocates, I can assure you not all of your attempts to help are welcome. In fact they are the root cause of the problem.

55th District Candidates
Bob Baird (Did Not Respond)
Felicia Brabec

Felicia Brabec
Candidate for State Representative, 55th District

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

County's disparities by working with community members, elected officials, and County staff to create the County's first Racial Equity Policy. Washtenaw County's Equity Policy is the culmination of about 6 years of time and effort by what began as a small group of dedicated people to a growing critical mass of County staff and administration, elected officials, and community members. Breathing life into this policy ensures that this work and the reality of many in our community cannot be ignored. There are inequities in our county and our state that we must face, address, and make right and I cannot wait to bring what we've learned right here in Washtenaw to Lansing. Additionally, I hope to continue my participation in our county's COVID-19 Community of Color Taskforce. This is a space where leaders of color not only share available resources but also strategize how to address the virus and its impact in the areas of the county that are disproportionately affected, namely our communities of color.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

The millage is a good step in being able to address funding shortages in our community particularly around mental health. The County has worked diligently to ensure that the money collected from the millage is utilized for mental health resources and public safety resources, often with a mental health component. Legally, we are not allowed to direct how other communities allocate the money rebated to them. However, that was a direct question that I asked.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

Washtenaw County has huge geographic disparities with regard to economic health, even within regions. This is one of the reasons I support Proposal C in Ann Arbor. We must address the lack of Affordable Housing. Additionally, I have worked to connect with groups like Moving Milan Forward who are organizing their local community to help revitalize the local economy and attract young families. If elected, I hope to bring similar policies to the state level that work to ensure that every Michigander is able to access affordable housing in their communities.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

When we remember the names Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Aura Rosser, and so many more, it is clear that there needs to be reforms implemented to stop this horrific pattern of police brutality. There needs to be ongoing de-escalation and bias training for public safety officials, and more of our taxpayer dollars should be focused on diversion programs to get people the help that they actually need in a sustainable manner. Our current justice system is the largest provider of mental health care in our communities. We have an opportunity now to look at who we are imprisoning and why. We need to focus on providing access to substance abuse counseling and mental health services instead of incarceration. I support creating county-wide critical incidence teams of mental health professionals who can be called into work with the residents in crisis first, instead of having law enforcement respond to the call. We need to modify the training process for police officers providing them with expertise in recognizing mental health issues as well as mental healthcare access for themselves. In addition, we need to prioritize provisions to support the transition back into life for previously incarcerated individuals.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Equitable funding for public education is essential to building a future for our state. Distance learning has elevated the vast disparities in access to educational resources that students across our state experience. We must remedy that if we have any chance at sustainable recovery from the multiple crises we are facing. I support universal broadband access for every public school student, to ensure that in this unprecedented time, every child is able to have the highest quality virtual learning experience possible—including the social and emotional support services that are integral to public schools. As a psychologist and social worker, I know the importance of expanding access to mental health care services to everyone, particularly young students who are grappling with how to best continue their education in such an unprecedented time. Additionally, every public school should have access to and the

presence of a social worker or psychologist in the building to be able to assist both the students and the teachers.

U.S. House of Representatives

7th District Candidates

Gretchen Driskell

Tim Walberg (Did Not Respond)

Gretchen Driskell

Democratic Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives, Michigan's 7th District

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

People of Color deserve to have their voices heard, and should always have a seat at the decision making table when developing solutions to issues that affect their communities. If elected, I would make sure that I am available to my constituents and plan on visiting the district every weekend to guarantee that I can best serve my community. I also plan on having open town halls that encourage discussion surrounding issues in our district to ensure all voices are heard. Washtenaw County has one of the states first racial equity officers, and I would support initiatives to employ racial equity officers across the 7th congressional. The incumbent, Tim Walberg, does not seem to understand the needs of those he is supposed to be representing. We need a partner at the federal level that is willing to address healthcare access and affordability for all, and, in the short term, provide resources and systems to protect and support all of our citizens during this pandemic.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

First of all, when voters pass a millage for a specific purpose that is the direction their representatives should follow. The rebated funds should go to addressing mental health or public safety. I strongly support allocating rebated funds towards mental health programs as much as possible. Doing so would improve the safety of our communities and help our police when responding to crimes. It would help reduce addiction, depression, suicide and domestic violence. I think it is important that we allocate resources in a way that ensures it reaches all communities, including rural and

low income communities, as access to mental health care in these populations is especially difficult.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

When elected, I will advocate and support legislation that works towards expanding access to affordable housing in Washtenaw County and the Michigan 7th as a whole. I support proposals which work towards acquiring and maintaining affordable housing while also providing social services for these tenants. The basic needs of our citizens ought to be met, and housing is one of those fundamental needs. And when our citizens are safe and healthy, they're able to give back to their communities, creating a positive feedback loop that is felt at every level of the community.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

I support criminal justice reform, as mass incarceration remains a significant issue in this country that disproportionately affects people of color. Too many are incarcerated for nonviolent crimes and need access to mental healthcare, which should be a fundamental tenet to any healthcare plan. Mental health services are better equipped than our prison system to address drug abuse, and with proper funding, can help play a role in criminal justice reform.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

The first hurdle we need to address in our district is making sure we have adequate access to rural broadband. Our district is primarily rural, and many families in our district cannot access high speed internet to work and learn from home in the first place. I know that many people are accessing mental health care over the internet where they can. I support the democrat house proposal in Washington that would provide funding for broadband infrastructure and when I am elected I will work to partner with our rural communities to get broadband to the home asap. I worked on this issue when I served in the state house and I know what we need to do to get it done now. Aside from the lack of basic infrastructure, we must work our best to maintain access to support services for our students learning from home. These services take shape in many forms, such as guaranteeing that students have access to a hot meal and offering counseling services. These services benefit the child and the parents who may not have the means to access these resources independently. Maintaining these services for our children should continue to be a top priority, and I

will work to ensure that these services receive the adequate support and funding they need.

12th District Candidates
Debbie Dingell (Did Not Respond)
Jeff Jones

Jeff Jones

Republican Candidate for U.S. House of Representatives, Michigan's 12th District

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

yes

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

They should be most effective in public health, schools, and recovery and prevention.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

I believe affordable housing is a necessity to good community. Creating new developments, supporting existing, and creating a weekly forum think tank to further the needed resolves.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

I think that cyclical sabbatical for first responders and community safety teams is a must, along with more adequate evaluation teams for the stress levels of officers and a better response resolve is necessary. PTSD should not automatically come with a psychotropic prescription, but rather a paid leave of absence. Certainly, tools should be available, like Identity Empowerment for both community and those active in the system. I find that a simple truth like "Love your neighbor" is a great truth to transform all of us community, and how we engage our community. I call it Ethical Resolves.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Home Services or adequate space training. Certainly, the recent Supreme Court decisions should apply reasonable resolves to engaging community, along with accurate scientific conclusion and accountability.

Washtenaw County Commissioner

District 1 Candidates

Rod Anderson (Did Not Respond)

Jason Maciejewski

Jason Maciejewski

Democratic Candidate for County Commissioner, District 1

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

Support the continuing inclusion the newly hired Equity Officer in discussions of policy and strategy across all county operations. It is especially important to continue the attention given by the County Health Department to COVID-19 testing in our communities that have been hardest hit - the communities that are historically underserved by health care due to cultural and economic systematic reasons. We need to insure voices from these communities are a part of our Public Health Board and the Community Mental Health Board. Strategies like pop-up testing sites and educational outreach must be made available. Conversations with leaders from these communities regarding access to health care must occur with county administration, the county health department and CMH.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

Mental health millage funds should be allocated to support partnerships with community-based organizations that are working on mental health and substance abuse issues. Partnerships through the CARES program should be strengthened and expanded. A continued focus should be placed on working with Chelsea, Dexter and Ann Arbor schools in the 1st district to assist students with resources to combat bullying and youth mental health issues. Outreach to make the public aware of available resources should also be funded by these millage funds. Active engagement with people of all ages is important to support people and spread knowledge in our community. I also support community-based organizations having the ability to propose initiatives to the county for funding from the mental health millage funds.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

Affordable housing is an important issue for residents and employers. I've heard from many businesses that they struggle to find stable staff because employees cannot afford to live in the community where they work. Most of the tools to enable affordable housing exist at municipal level, through planning and zoning ordinances, as well as oversight of development projects. The county should have the Equity Officer engaged with stakeholders to combat racism in housing availability. When the opportunity arises with county owned property, affordable development should be a priority.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

We now have a spotlight placed on the unequal treatment that communities of color have systematically been subjected to throughout our history. We must root out racial, gender and economic biases in our justice system. I support re-starting the county's Criminal Justice Collaborative Council (CJCC) to review public safety, justice infrastructure, policies and resources. The CJCC has citizen representation and views its work through an equity and system change lens. I want to insure that western Washtenaw County representation is part of a re-started CJCC. I also support the work and leadership of Sheriff Clayton on de-escalation training and cultural change across law enforcement. We must look at factors that are important in reducing crime like access to substance abuse and mental health services. It is also crucial to work on strategies for those returning to society after incarceration to be successful. As a matter of routine, the practices of policing need to be evaluated.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

At the county level of government, the CARES program program is a new resource that can reach students when they are physically unable to attend classes. Working to expand the reach of CARES in partnership with the school districts will be an important link for students and parents. CARES can also be a gateway to other community-based resources.

District 2 Candidates
Scott Inman (Did Not Respond)
Sue Shink

Sue Shink
Democratic Candidate for County Commissioner, District 2

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

I currently serve on the Board of Commissioners. Reducing the racial disparities in our county is one of my top priorities. I have been actively connecting with residents around issues of disparity, including COVID-19. Washtenaw County's Racial Equity Officer, Alize Asberry Payne has with full Board of Commissioners support, created a COVID-19 Task Force for people of color. Crystal Campbell, the Board of Commissioners Communications and Operation Manager, with whom I work closely, also serves on that task force. I support and work with members of the Health Department's Community Voices for Health Equity Team which works collaboratively with the Health Department to identify and respond to issues that community members in low-opportunity areas identify as important. I have also been connecting with residents around economic and education opportunity gaps caused by systemic racism in our community. In addition, I have been active in the Washtenaw Food Policy Council which is adding a racial equity "seat" and executive board position. This is part of an effort to infuse racial equity work in everything we do at Washtenaw County.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

As a Washtenaw County Commissioner, my job is to ensure that the millage funds allocated to the county are spent addressing mental health issues--and that is happening. The #wishyouknew youth mental health campaign is raising awareness and connection around youth mental health issues, crisis response programs are diverting individuals with mental health and substance use issues away from jail and emergency departments, treatment support for justice-involved individuals has increased as has expanded education for first responders and supportive housing initiatives. While it is the responsibility of the elected officials in the jurisdictions to

appropriately use their millage rebates, I would hope that they would use it to increase mental health response and substance use disorder treatment within their public safety programs--for example, increasing the involvement of mental health professionals within their departments. People often call public safety when a loved one is experiencing a mental health crisis so communities should provide trained mental health professionals in those cases instead of or in addition to police officers.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

I will continue to work with community partners to increase affordable housing in Washtenaw County, including the proposed development on Platt Road and cooperating with Habitat for Humanity. Washtenaw County has been looking at ways to increase affordable housing. We provide funding for affordable housing, supportive services so that people can stay in their homes, funding through Barrier Busters so that people can stay in their homes, assistance to people living in affordable housing units so that they are more habitable. I acknowledge there is much more to do.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

Our criminal justice system must serve all of our residents regardless of their skin color, age or address. I am using my position as Washtenaw County Commissioner to advocate for criminal justice reform and will continue to do so. I work with our Racial Equity Officer, Alize Asberry Payne. I work and will continue to work with our Sheriff, the Courts and our next prosecutor as well as residents, such as those involved in Citizens for Racial Equity in Washtenaw (CREW) and Trische' Duckworth of Survivors Speak to look at our criminal justice system, where it may not be functioning in a just manner, and processes to achieve equity in justice. Many conversations among separate and co-equal branches of government are happening now and must continue to happen for systemic changes to be made. The Board is considering the possibility of recreating the Criminal Justice Collaborative Council with modifications.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Connectivity issues in Washtenaw County are a huge problem for many residents. What should be considered a public utility is instead a profit-driven product. Washtenaw County is working with internet providers, school districts and the Washtenaw County Broadband Task Force to supply as much support as we can. For example, the Broadband Task Force supplied hot spots to township halls in the

southwest part of the county. It's not enough, yet it is a start. Recently several commissioners and members of the Broadband task force met with an internet provider to see what more could be done to get internet to people. We have been working with our state and congressional representatives to try to encourage legislative solutions to connectivity issues. Community Mental Health is now providing some services electronically to maintain connections in spite of physical distancing.

Washtenaw County is working with parents and school districts to explore the possibility of small learning support groups for children whose parents cannot pay for a private learning support group. In addition, Washtenaw County has a long history of providing extracurricular support to students through our community partners. I will work to continue and expand that support.

District 3 Candidates

Shannon Beeman (Did Not Respond)

Ken Siler

Ken Siler

Republican Candidate for County Commissioner, District 3

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

Contact questioners to explain possibilities

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

I was opposed to the millage

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

I never understood what "affordable" actually means except that low income housing should be championed

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

I do not believe that our current system is inequitable

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Proper information as to home availability

District 4 Candidates
Michelle Nicholai (Did Not Respond)
Caroline Sanders

Caroline Sanders
Democratic Candidate for County Commissioner, District 4

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

Simply invite, engage and ask minority and systematically marginalized people.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

I supported and voted for the millage. I would first need to know how the resources have been distributed thus far in order to assess how they should be allocated. COVID will change what we presently think we know for certain now.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

I will seek factual information on the support, barriers and funding issues that have shaped Washtenaw's lack of equitable/accessible and affordable housing. Housing experts and elected officials will be asked to provide housing policy and rationale for making housing decisions.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

Criminal justice reform is linking to a community's decision to fund social support services versus funding the penal system. I choose to support social support services and offer pre and post incarceration programs for citizens/returning citizens who are products of communities who do not value and invest in all residents.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

I have advocated and supported students and families for over 3 decades and my advocacy will continue. The support to create an equitable education system with built in "whole student" supports is present in Washtenaw County, the will must be present to unlock these supports. I pledge to research, identify and unlock these supports with the assistance of key health and education providers.

District 7 Candidates

Andy LaBarre

Joe Miriani (Did Not Respond)

Andy LaBarre

Democratic Candidate for County Commissioner, District 7

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

Two steps. The first is to continue to fund and support the work of our Racial Equity Officer. That will help address county operations, service delivery, and policies to ensure they have considerations for racial equity and seek to eliminate those inequities. The second is to advocate for additional public health funding and dedicate a portion of that funding (I prefer a millage) towards the public health racial inequities.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

I wrote the millage. We did not have legal authority to dictate how municipalities could use the rebate money. I think the best choice would be supplements to mental health services provided by the County, or local public safety needs.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

I am broadly supportive of expanded affordable housing. I would specifically continue my advocacy for the development that is inclusive of affordable housing, of the Platt Rd. parcel, which the County owns.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

I believe there needs to be fundamental police reform in this country, specifically to eliminate the existing biases against people of color, especially black people. I also think it needs to be de-militarized in the use of weaponry and tactics with far less (though not entire elimination in all instances) application. If I am elected I will

advocate for the one level of government that is capable of causing such change, the federal government, to enact national reform which states and local governments must comply with. In Michigan, the only Sheriff services which are genuinely flexible are discretionary services. The discretionary services of the WCSO are the most progressive and beneficial as it relates to the issue of racial equity. The constitutional services and those services which are provided contractually, are not truly flexible, as failure to meet mandates or contracts will result in successful legal action against the WCSO or county.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

This will primarily be a function for school boards and state policy makers, but I will advocate that any and all county services used by these students remain fully accessible while they are at home. The support to parents would be communication of availability and flexible delivery of the services in free or affordable fashion.

Ypsilanti Township Supervisor Candidates

Brenda Stumbo

No Challenger

Brenda Stumbo

Democratic Candidate for Ypsilanti Township Supervisor

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

I believe a YMCA in eastern Washtenaw County would be a good place to combat health disparities. The vision is to have a place where regardless of income you can feed your mind body and soul. A place where you connect to resources and it will have a child development center so we can close the education and income divide in one of the wealthiest county's in the state of Michigan.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

Honestly I don't think it was fair how communities who are paying nothing for the millage because they are reimbursed more than their millage would of raised is border line illegal. It was a good idea and people supported because they thought it would help the people they love only to learn that if you had social security disability for mental health the millage could not be used for them. Thought it would enhance services and it didn't. Building a new 911 center with money that should of went to public safety. doesn't seem right either. We need mental health facility for overnight stays. To stabilize those in need. Now you have to go to another facility in another county and not have loved ones be able to visit. It's been a disappointment

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

Did Not Respond

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

Did Not Respond

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

Did Not Respond

Ypsilanti Township Trustee Candidates

John Newman (Did Not Respond)

Gloria Peterson (Did Not Respond)

Debbie Swanson

Jimmie Wilson (Did Not Respond)

Debbie Swanson

Democratic Candidate for Ypsilanti Township Trustee

SURVEY RESPONSES

Q: If elected, what steps would you take to engage Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color in developing solutions to address the health disparities highlighted by COVID-19?

I would listen to people. The best solutions come from listening to the people impacted by the problems in our community. I would engage with residents by listening to them. It's important to attend neighborhood meetings and events within the community. I believe listening is one of the best ways to learn.

Q: What is your position about the millage and how the rebated funds should be used? Where do you think it's best to allocate resources to effectively address the mental health and substance use disorder crisis in our community?

I believe that money collected through millages should be used as they were represented to citizens on the ballot when they were presented for a vote. Residents in Washtenaw County have been very generous with millage approvals. It's important to respect that generosity with transparent expenditures and resources aligned with what the voters approved. Millages are essential in helping support critical services in our community. Maintaining trust with residents is the best way to create a relationship where future millages will continue to receive support. I support intergovernmental collaboration with resources so that efficiency of services can be achieved and the maximum amount of support can be given to citizens in need of help. I believe in using resources to support short term solutions that are urgent but also allocating resources for prevention and for long term help that will hopefully reduce the need for urgent help as people work towards more consistent healing and personal paths to wellness.

Q: If elected, how will your office champion housing in Washtenaw County which is equitable, accessible, and affordable?

Equitable, accessible, and affordable housing is necessary in creating healthy communities. Again, listen to and working with people to seek solutions is critically important. Too often, people plan solutions without hearing from impacted individuals. I plan to listen and learn from the people I represent. I also believe that it is important for governmental agencies to collaborate and work together to increase quality of life issues like affordable housing within a community.

Q: What is your viewpoint regarding criminal justice reform? If elected, would you use your office to advocate for criminal justice reform? If so, how would you do that?

Criminal justice reform requires that we rethink how we care for people within our community including economic development, education and healthcare. When we fail in those areas we will see the criminal justice system having to deal with our failures. I would like to be more proactive at looking at what happens or is not happening before people are interacting with the criminal justice system to seek solutions that would decrease crime and uplift people. I believe that we need to look at the institutional injustices that are part of the system and work toward creating a more just and fair system that will make our communities safer and more humane.

Q: If elected, how would you use your office to ensure that students stay connected to the social and emotional support services when they are physically unable to attend school? What support would you provide to parents?

As a teacher, I know how important social and emotional learning is for students even prior to the current pandemic environment. I will continue to support SEL teaching learning and services in schools. I believe the conversations about the importance of SEL should extend beyond schools to the greater community. We are very fortunate to have many organizations in our county that can help promote and provide support for SEL. Communication with parents is a critical part of caring for the well being of the whole child and providing families with an extra layer of support. Local government and schools need to work together to make sure collaboration increases and supports wellness within the community. Stable consistent internet access is a right that all residents need at this time. Reliable internet access is critical to wellness at this time.