

Carrollton Caucus

Questions for New Orleans City Council District-A Candidates.

RESPONSES FROM Dan Ring

Thank you for participating in the forum organized by Carrollton Area Network and Carrollton Caucus. The forum afforded you an opportunity to speak to the residents of Carrollton directly. For further voter education, we ask all candidates to please provide us your written responses to the questions below, some of which are like the forum questions. This is a chance to give a fuller answer, though succinct and direct to the question is also appreciated.

Carrollton Caucus will develop a score card based on candidate responses to forum questions merged with written responses.

Please remember Carrollton Caucus is not an endorsing group. However, we would appreciate receiving your responses by close of business Friday September 22, 2017. The score card will be released about a week before election day to social and news media. We will ensure you receive a copy of the score card when released to the media.

PLEASE SEND YOUR RESPONSES to h.nagendra@att.net by close of business Friday September 22, 2017

QUESTIONS

GENERIC

What are the issues facing District A for residents? For businesses?

For residents, issues range from crime to infrastructure to affordable housing. We need to be multi-focused on the Council to address these issues. I will be able to work with residents on these issues to get worked on and resolved. As business owners face more issues with everything from increased internet competition to legal handcuffing from city policies, the Council will have to work to keep these businesses fluid. As Councilperson for the district I will work for the business owners so that business flourishes in the area.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

1. What steps will you take to lower gun & violent crime in our City?

I will work on a community policing program that gets officers out of the cars and into the neighborhoods. By doing this interaction, violence can be stemmed and crime can be reduced because of the interaction. In regards to gun violence specifically I will work to promote gun buyback programs. I will also work on youth programs that create a culture of motivation to follow the correct path.

2. What will you do to reduce the number of people incarcerated in our City & to improve success of re-entry for prisoners returning home upon release?

I will work to get non-violent and low-level offenders out of the jails and into programs that rehabilitate rather than incarcerate these offenders. This will lighten the load for police, courts and the city therefore freeing up funds to cover administration of the rehabilitative programs. I will work with Step Up Louisiana to "ban the box" on job applications as well as work with local schools and employers to highlight the hiring of offenders. By doing this we make a more fluent process judicially and reduce the rate of recidivism.

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3. Do you support the current policy on bail for City offenses? (yes/no)

I do not support the current policy on bail for city offenses. There are far too many, again, low-level non-violent offenders that have to sit in jail and wait for a 701 hearing for release. This sometimes costs these offenders jobs, housing and other social norms that are lost with excessive jail time. The current policy taxes both the DA and Public Defender departments in trying cases that should be mitigated with a citation.

4. What is your position on the role of New Orleans police in enforcement of Federal immigration law?

The New Orleans Police should not be used in the enforcement of the Federal immigration law for a few reasons. It is outside the scope of the role of local police to act as ICE agents. Secondly the law hasn't even withstood challenges at the appellate level. Lastly we are a sanctuary city and we should hold tight to that belief.

HOUSING, LAND-USE, ZONING, PRESERVATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY / DEVELOPMENT, ETC.

(Housing costs are rising dramatically for both renters and homeowners. New Orleans Data Center recently reported that renters need to earn \$19 per hour to be able to rent in New Orleans.)

1. In our District A neighborhoods, an increasing number of long-term residents of all income levels can no longer afford to live here. Why do you think this is happening and would you do to reverse this trend?

Property values have escalated drastically since Katrina. Due to the influx of individuals moving in that lived in cities with higher property values for less house, the market became a seller's market and drove those living at a far lower average income base than those moving in from other cities. As the short-term rental market heated up, a new dimension was added to the rising property values. With the short-term rental market somewhat regulated, this may help to mitigate rising costs. Also some of the influx post-Katrina is actually in slight reverse. These two phenomena may work to keep costs from at least escalating again. I would call for an expansion of the inclusionary housing plan to allow mixed income neighborhoods to grow and allow those that want to live be able to live there instead of living where they can only afford. This is not to say to allow people to live above their means, it is just saying to allow people to live in a variety of neighborhoods not just low-rent neighborhoods.

2. What will you do to support accessibility and wide distribution of affordable housing across neighborhoods?

Again I will work with Baton Rouge and HUD to get every dollar we can for affordable housing. I will work to create programs with lenders to allow those that truly desire the American dream of home ownership to be able to own their own homes. We need to make sure primarily that Baton Rouge doesn't handcuff our desire to offer affordable housing. We need to become an individual entity from the State regarding housing policies. This will be tough but I will fight that fight for our citizens.

3. Do you support current policies related to Short Term Rentals? What changes will you make if any, and how would you ensure enforcement of these regulations?

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I do not support the current policies related to Short Term Rentals (STRs). I believe the law was written with specific intent to allow as many players in the game as possible. This law is not good law. This law undermines the whole concept of STRs. STRs were introduced as a way for a person to rent a room or section of their domicile for a short time. There are entities taking over almost whole streets in the name of short term renting.

4. Carrollton is under partial HDLC control to review requests for demolition. What enforcement mechanism will you employ to prevent 1) deterioration of historic structures and 2) demolition through negligence?

I believe that the HDLC should be open to working with homeowners while holding the oversight to maintain historic structures. By this I mean is that if there is no major change to aesthetics then the staff should be able to approve. If there is a major change to aesthetics then it has to go to the commission. As far as demolition, demolition should be approved if there is no salvaging the property only. The build in should be done if it maintains the aesthetics of the neighborhood. There should be one independent person to work strictly to mitigate decisions made that need appeal or if there is complaint. We can even institute the presentation of the blueprint at the neighborhood meetings to maintain further transparency.

5. District A residents are receiving tax bills that are sometimes 50% higher than the previous year. How will you lessen the impact of increased valuation of homes and make it easier for residents to pay their tax bill?

I will call for an independent audit each year of home valuations. I will ask the city to justify the increase valuations. I will recommend a streamlined process in contesting valuations so if at least you cannot get a reduction you will be able to contest it without waiting months to get it done.

Infrastructure, Green Space, Parks, Recreation, Public Services, etc.

Infrastructure

1. Given the city's recognition of climate change & recent flooding events, what steps will you take to prioritize resilience and sustainability in the city's infrastructure
I will call for the building of bioswales, stormwater pools, more trees and a stronger call for a full recycling program as well as a measure to look at the reduction of plastic bags. I will work within my role as council member to see that we continue to obtain vehicles be they buses or city vehicles that are environmentally friendly. I will work to keep credits coming for renewable energy technology and solar and alternative power.

2. Given that moving towards making New Orleans a "green" city may impact Entergy's profits, what can the city's regulatory powers do to assure renewable sustainable energy use is optimized and rates controlled now and in the future?

We, as the oversight arm of Entergy, need to make sure that Entergy is looking to the future not in the past as it is with the desire to build the replacement power station at Michoud. This proposal is an old-school proposal with not assurance that other members of MISO do not use our power without compensation. We can bid out the

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process to other area power generators if they have the means.

3. What reforms in S&WB governance will you advocate to assure accountability to the city and execute citizen oversight?

I would call for an immediate investigation as to the goings on for the last several years at the S&WB. Then I would call for the State to give us 50% oversight of the processes in place and 100% of the management. We are consistently answering questions that should either be answered by the S&WB or the State. We need the dotted line to become a solid line so that the Mayor has clear authority and we are able to provide the citizens with any information at any time.

Parks

1. What steps would you take to ensure public oversight in parks, particularly those which are governed as a public private partnership, such as Audubon and City Parks?

I would recommend, in the case of the Audubon and NORDC, that we work with the parks so to continue a strong relationship with the private partners. We will work with City Park to ensure that the park is open and available and work with grantors to create programs for young folks to get them off on the right foot. I would most importantly work to ensure the NORDC parks are maintained. I will work with the locals sports teams (Saints, Pelicans, BabyCakes, Voodoo) to create recreational programs that will allow those children without an open source of money to be given an opportunity at physical betterment.

2. Would you support the expansion of the Lafitte Greenway to include an additional 1/2 mile across City Park Avenue to Canal Boulevard? (yes/no)

Yes. I believe it is something that should be done to fully complete the Greenway.

Public Services: What will you do to ensure adequate capacity and accessibility for Mental Health and substance abuse care in the city?

I believe we need to reclaim Charity hospital and use it as a mental health facility along with keeping the option open for use as a substance abuse care facility. It is built for that purpose. It was decontaminated after the storm for that purpose and we can reclaim it if we fight hard enough. With the immense need for both PTSD-affected kids that are young adults now and adults who suffered in the aftermath of the storm as well as an increasing opioid addiction epidemic the need to get folks real help and not jail time is the sign of a community that cares for some of its most vulnerable citizens.

Budget, Taxation, City Finances, Ethics and Good Government / Patronage

1. What do you think should be done to improve and increase citizen participation in government decision making processes?

I believe by doing one of two thing, or both, we increase participation in the process. First, rather than holding all council meetings during the day we should either a)hold a meeting during the day and at night each two week period of the month or hold a meeting once but have the hour be for day then the next meeting for the night. Also public access attention to the meeting could be increased by showing it on the local cable station. We can even discuss facebook Live as a way to get participation increased.

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2. How would you insure that our many commissions fairly represent all the residents and fairly manage the public interest and our public dollars?

I would call for a review of all commissions. I would want to make sure there are no hidden agenda by the City in our tightest point. For those smaller scale commissions we can hire residents if possible in a need to not slow the process. This makes more sense from a budgetary analysis.

- a) When is it appropriate for the City Council to override decisions made by CPC, HDLC and other city department recommendations

I think that any time we are tasked to override the work of a commission that we should do our due diligence to make sure there is a clear cut issue from the department.