

Napa-Solano Central Labor Council
Candidate Questionnaire
City Council

Candidate's Name: __Katy Miessner__ Area/District: __Vallejo City Council__
Mailing Address: __PO Box 6111, Vallejo CA., 94591__
Contact #: __707642-2100; 415/412-2874 (c) _ E-Mail: __KatyForCouncil@gmail.com__
Party Affiliation: __Democrat__ Committee ID #: # 1356439__
Campaign Manager: __Myself/Marti Brown (advisor) __ Contact #: (same as above)__
Endorsement Checks - Make Payable To: __Miessner for City Council 2013__
Treasurer's Name: __Allen Wildermuth__ Contact #: Same as above
Union Affiliation (Present/Prior): __SEIU, while working at Boston University__

Questions

1. Why are you running for office and what have you done to deserve Labors endorsement?

I have worked tirelessly as a volunteer since I moved to Vallejo in 2000 to improve our city and I want to serve the City of Vallejo on Council as a continuation of this work. In the thirteen years I have lived here, I have come to know wonderful people all over Vallejo. This town has great promise and I want to work as a Council Member to see that promise realized.

I support sunshine laws and fair and effective governance. I will research issues and practice due diligence when asked to approve a city resolution, and will base decisions on the greatest good for Vallejo.

2. Have you or your campaign manager ever worked on other campaigns?

Gary Cloutier for Mayor, Marti Brown for City Council, Stephanie Gomes for City Council, Bob Sampayan for City Council, Robert McConnell for City Council, No on Measure A, Al Gore for President John Kerry for President, No on Proposition 8.

3. What is your background in public service?

I have 20 years experience in non-profit financial management (similar to public service) and have been actively involved in City of Vallejo and Solano County issues through various groups (Sierra Club/Solano County, Mira Theatre Guild, Vallejo Waterfront Coalition, Downtown Advisory Group, Vallejo Heights Neighborhood Association, Vallejo Artists Guild) since moving here in 2000. I am currently a Director on the Solano County Fairgrounds Board. I have also worked on HIV/AIDS Prevention, volunteered to assist people dying of AIDS, ran two marathons to raise money for HIV/AIDS Services, volunteered for the AIDS Life/Cycle, and raising funds for NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League).

4. Why are you seeking an endorsement from the Napa-Solano Central Labor Council?

I am a union supporter and would be honored to have the endorsement of the Central Labor Council.

5. How long have you been in the community? Describe your community ties.

I have lived in Vallejo since 2000. I have lived in many cities/states and Vallejo is by far my favorite place. My husband and I intend on staying here.

I am or have been a member of:

Current Director, Solano County Fairgrounds; Founding member of Better Vallejo; Vice President and newsletter designer, Vallejo Heights Neighborhood Association; Mira Theatre Guild (treasurer); Sierra Club/Solano Group Executive Committee; Vallejo Downtown Advisory Group; Vallejo Waterfront Coalition; Vallejoans for Community Planned Renewal; Vallejo Artists Guild (treasurer); numerous articles regarding city finances for Vallejo Independent Bulletin.

6. List your key supporters, including campaign volunteers and hired consultants.

Elected and Appointed Officials (Partial list): Vice Mayor Stephanie Gomes, Council members Bob Sampayan, Marti Brown, Robert McConnell, Former Mayor Tony Intintoli, Former Solano County Supervisor, District One Barbara Kondylis, Planning Commissioner Karimah Karah, Solano County Fair Association Director Richard Martinez, Greater Vallejo Recreational District Chair Dennis Albright, Greater Vallejo Recreational District and Commissioner Vice-Chair and Vallejo Architectural and Landmarks Commissioner Wendell Quigley, Greater Vallejo Recreational District Director and Candidate for Vallejo City Council Liat Meitzenheimer, Greater Vallejo Recreational District Committee Member Karol Heppe, Participatory Budgeting, Vallejo Chair Joey Lake, Participatory Budgeting, Vice-Chair Lynda Daniels, Participatory Budgeting, Vallejo Vice Chair Lynda Daniels, Napa Vallejo College Board Trustee Rusal Cayangyang, Sierra Club/Solano Group Patricia Gatz Former Secretary, Vallejo Design Review Board Chair Adam Chavez, Vallejo Design Review Board Member Kevin Brent Forman, Vallejo Architectural and Landmarks Commissioner Pearl Jones Tranter, Metropolitan Transportation Commission Policy Advisory Council Member Richard Burnett

I have not hired consultants.

7. Have you received endorsements or contributions from any Labor PACs for this race or any prior races? Where do you expect to receive your main financial commitments?

I have not received any PAC donations for this or my prior candidacy for Solano County Supervisor. My financial commitments are from individuals.

8. What is your campaign budget and how much have you raised so far?

\$35-\$40K; I've raised approximately \$18,000

9. What do you see as the major issues in this campaign? What distinguishes your candidacy and campaign from the other candidates for this office?

I am an independent candidate who has the support of the people of Vallejo and it is their best interests that I will represent.

The major issues are Public Safety and Economic Development. Even with Measure B, money is scarce and poor financial management erodes our ability to provide services. I will use my knowledge of the issues and my financial expertise to make sure money is spent where it is most needed and most effective.

10. What is your position on the use of tax dollars by public agencies or publicly funded agencies to hire consultants to prevent workers from forming unions?

I oppose such actions.

11. If you would vote to privatize public services in an effort to provide cost savings to the city, would you require contractors to provide pay and benefits comparable to what the city would otherwise provide?

I believe that regular, ongoing public services are best provided by public employees, for continuity and effectiveness.

12. Would you support a preference for local contractors bidding on local work and/or mandating that a certain percentage of the workforce be hired locally?

Yes, Vallejoans need jobs in Vallejo.

13. Please describe the circumstances when you would intentionally cross a picket line. Would you honor an AFL-CIO Boycott? Yes No Maybe

I wouldn't cross a picket line.

I have honored and would honor an AFL-CIO Boycott.

14. What new revenue sources would you support to fund existing or new city services?

I would work to eliminate roadblocks to business expansion, support programs that provide vocational training and job readiness for the under-employed, and to send a clear message to developers or those wishing to bring business to the City that we welcome new, 21st century businesses that are compatible with our existing strengths in light industry and manufacturing, tourism, health services, and higher education. I fully support robust business licenses for rental units, increased fines for negligent banks for REO homes.

15. Do you support the creation of new pension, health care or retiree health care plans that would provide fewer benefits for newly hired employees? What is your understanding of how cost savings are realized under these two-tiered plans?

I dislike two-tiered systems as they create a "second class" of younger/newer workers and create an "us and them." Cost savings would be realized by lowered costs for a segment of employees.

16. What is your opinion of the benefits of big box/large chain retail stores verses local businesses or locally owned chain stores?

Locally owned businesses tend to hire more people, and locally owned businesses recycle profits back into the community. For instance, Walmart's profits are not recycled into the community; they go to shareholders and owners who spend them in their own community and not in Vallejo.

Most big-box stores hire part-time workers with no benefits. Costco is one exception to this, there may be others.

17. Would you vote to require a full economic/community impact report to measure such areas as pollution, crime, traffic and impact on existing businesses? Do you support SB469?

I have not read the full bill, but I support the bill's intention, to address a very significant impact that Supercenters have on local economies. With Supercenters—as with any new, large proposed development—the public deserves to know what the impacts will be: more traffic impacts, potential harm to wildlife, pollution to nearby creeks. The public needs to know that policy makers are making an informed decision.

18. As an elected official, would you be accessible to workers or their union representatives on work related matters, or any issues that may come before you to vote on, or exercise some influence in a decision? If so, please name labor issues where you have worked with labor unions in the past to come to consensus.

When making a decision, I would weigh all perspectives, including that of the unions and base any decision on the greatest good to the Vallejo community. I would be accessible to union representatives, while, if need be, upholding good faith bargaining and confidentiality.

Labor issues I have worked or am working on:

I am currently investigating the use of Eminent Domain to seize underwater mortgages from banks, a program that KEEPS people in their homes. This program is getting a lot of support from Unions in Richmond, CA, and it's my understanding that SEIU and other Union (non-PERS) pension funds will be used to fund this program. I held an information session and introduced the Richmond advisors to the Vallejo community, Mayor Davis and two city council members. I will be meeting with the City Manager and City Attorney on this issue.

I worked with UFGW on the Vallejo Walmart Supercenter.

19. Would you help to appoint representatives of organized labor to boards and commissions to ensure working people have a full voice in public policy decisions?

I would consider Union representatives equally when choosing appointments. I would review resumes/applications for those best suited, and approach the appointment process in a fair and effective manner.

20. What is your understanding of the Federal Davis-Bacon Law and the State Prevailing Wage? Also, do you feel prevailing wages should be paid when using public money for projects negotiated with City Redevelopment Agency's?

The city no longer has a redevelopment agency since redevelopment was abolished by Governor Brown. I support living wages for qualified people hired through a fair hiring process.

21. If government funds were used in constructing a facility in your jurisdiction, as an elected official, would you request and encourage the use of Project Labor Agreements for construction and operation?

I support hiring qualified people at a prevailing or living wage through a fair hiring process, and PLAs are a tool for doing this. The City of Vallejo has been using PLAs for many years and their use has been effective.

22. Would you support the creation of a Labor Compliance Program for jobs with State and Federal money to insure compliance with state labor laws regarding public works construction?

I support hiring qualified people at a prevailing or living wage through a fair hiring process, and if a Labor Compliance Program results in this outcome I would support its creation.

23. Would you support increases to the minimum wage to keep up with inflation and help workers provide for their families?

Absolutely.

24. Do you support a living wage requirement for contractors accepting jobs funded by public monies from cities? (A living wage is defined as a wage above the level to qualify for public assistance plus affordable health benefits.)

Yes

25. Do you support binding arbitration for public employees for disputes during contract negotiations? What about grievances and disciplinary action?

I do not support Binding Interest Arbitration in public union contract negotiations. Spending decisions must be done by the council and in the light of day. Our representatives should not be allowed to avoid spending decisions on the largest part of our budgets by allowing the decision of a third party arbitrator to prevail. Binding Arbitration allows a third-part arbitrator—who does not have to be a Vallejo resident and who is not answerable to Vallejo citizens and the City Council—to make spending decisions on behalf of the City, The arbitrator is only allowed to choose one sides' last final offer and cannot mediate.

I support a fair process in grievances and disciplinary actions, and would ask labor reps for their advice on whether they believe binding arbitration can ensure a fair process that employees can trust.

26. Do you support the Right to Strike for:

- a. Private employees: ___ Yes ___ No (*depends*)
- b. Public employees: ___ Yes ___ No (*depends*)

27. If financial cutbacks become necessary in your term of office, where would you make them? (Please list by priority for cutback.)

- *Cuts to non-essential, non-staff budget line items.*
- *Voluntary early retirement*
- *Carefully examine program deliveries and outcomes, and –with input from staff familiar with the programs— cut those that would have the least impact on the community.*

- *Hiring freeze (non-essential positions)*
- *Wage freeze (for all, including management)*

28. What is your position on using Chapter 9 Bankruptcy as a means to nullify negotiated labor contracts? What is your opinion of the Vallejo bankruptcy filing?

Chapter Nine is not meant to, nor should it be used, to nullify contracts although this can be a consequence.

Bankruptcy must be used if it is necessary to protect the assets of a jurisdiction. If a jurisdiction is facing unavoidable insolvency, elected officials, in their fiduciary capacity are required to file for bankruptcy. Representatives of a jurisdiction could even be personally liable if their jurisdiction were to become insolvent—i.e., unable to pay bills and meet payroll.

Bankruptcy is the absolute last resort for a city's finances, which is why we saw the Vallejo City Council vote unanimously in favor of bankruptcy: there was no choice. Jurisdictions and unions need to work closely and in good faith to resolve financial problems before they balloon into insolvency. And jurisdictions have the responsibility to keep employees and citizens alike, informed of the true financial situation.

29. Would you support a policy that requires contractors and sub-contractors, who wish to bid on public works construction projects, to pre-qualify, based on technical and financial fitness, safety, consistent adherence to state and federal laws, and the utilization of apprentices enrolled only at state-approved apprenticeship programs (which typically graduate apprentices)?

I will support pre-qualification if the process assists in assuring that bids come from contractors and subs who meet minimum qualifications needed for a project, and contractors must meet certain standards to assure quality and safety.

I am in favor of apprentice programs. Apprentice programs that are state-approved provide the assurance that graduates have the skills to needed for projects to meet certain standards.

30. Would you be in favor of bringing forward a resolution to implement such a pre-qualifying policy within the first 6 months of your term?

Yes, depending on the language of the policy and other competing priorities.

31. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

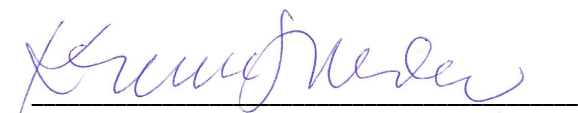
I am very concerned about the issues of the deepening divide between the rich and poor, climate change and sea-level rise, alternative energy, birth control, immigration, the wars in the middle east, what to do about the homeless, drug/alcohol abuse. Vallejo has been deeply impacted by many of these issues, especially the housing meltdown and deceptive/predatory lending by banks.

I am in favor of investigating Richmond, CA's new initiative of using Eminent Domain to take underwater mortgages AWAY from banks, to keep people IN their homes. I held a public information session that has resulted in conversations taking place with the mayor and some city council

members, and hope to see the city continue to investigate this for a possibility of adoption. I am working on this as an ordinary citizen, and whether or not I am elected, I will continue to pursue this idea. I don't see solutions to the housing crisis coming from the federal government—TARP and other programs are out of reach of many, and we in Vallejo continue to see owners abandoning their homes and squatters moving in, with the continual degradation of our neighborhoods.

Over the years, various factions in Vallejo have opposed each other, and the more time spent on opposition, the less time there is for creating solutions. We all have a great opportunity to work together as the City embarks on the creation of a new General Plan, an opportunity to create our vision together. We are out of bankruptcy and with one-time Measure B funds, we have the opportunity to reinvent our city and it is my hope that we do this together.

Thank you for the opportunity to interview with the Napa-Solano Labor Council.



Signature

August 10, 2013
Date