



LOCAL 660 CHARLOTTE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

2601 E. 7th Street Charlotte, NC 28204
704-331-9515

City Council Candidate Questionnaire

1. Pay Equity and Compensation

Do you support increasing firefighter salaries to ensure they are competitive with peer cities and reflective of the essential, high-risk nature of the job and close the gap between CFD and CMPD pay? If so, how would you advocate for that in the city budget? Would you support a public safety pay plan that ensures that police and fire make the same hourly rate for comparable positions? Would you vote in favor of COLA adjustments so that our members pay keeps pace with inflation?

Yes. I'd continue upon my consistent advocacy and awareness as to increasing salaries for fit police and firefighters. The majority of my immediate and extended family is military. I'm a former Federal Park Ranger, at border parks and the National Mall (which is considered a border park). Advocating for firefighters is already amongst my core values. I'd also foster stronger POSITIVE and symbiotic relationships with the firefighters, police, the sheriff and deputies, and all other servicepersons for our city, because it's necessary for efficient, ethical governance and city oneness and valuation. Yes. Yes. (I have to ask ... have you ever had anyone answer, no?)

2. Benefits and Retirement

What is your position on protecting and enhancing firefighter benefits, such as healthcare and retirement? Would you support maintaining or expanding these benefits for current and future firefighters? As other municipalities re-instate health insurance benefits, would you support doing the same for firefighters?

I'm a proponent. Yes. Yes.

3. Collective Bargaining Rights

If the North Carolina law preventing collective bargaining was repealed, would you support firefighters and other public employees the right to collectively bargain? Why or why not?

Yes. Police, firefighters, the sheriff and deputies and other servicepersons have too often been treated like subordinates of the city without or with few rights as opposed to city partners. The history of poor relations between these departments and the city has been on public display; this is why I'd support collective bargaining generally if the applicable law was repealed. Furthermore, I'd generally support collective bargaining, because no-strike clauses are standard thereto. For obvious reasons, strikes would be very bad for city efficiency, safety and prosperity. But this, then, again is another reason why I fully support you and other servicepersons. As a fellow serviceperson and in solidarity with Charlotteans and beyond, we only take issue with unfit servicepersons. And from my experience in the park service, that is a core value shared by all rangers, border patrol agents, and FBI agents alike, because quite frankly unfit servicepersons pose a major threat to their own peers foremost.

4. Budget Prioritization

In tight budget years, would you be willing to prioritize funding for fire department staffing, equipment, training, and mental health services? Please explain your approach to balancing public safety with other city expenditures.

Yes. Fire department staffing, equipment, training AND mental health services are necessities - and generally non-negotiable so. I'd be as resolved and firm as I have always been, and use that same energy to ensure sufficient funding for you.

5. Workforce Mental Health and Safety

Studies show that firefighters need longer than 24 hours to recover from their 24-hour shift. The current trend around the United States, and even locally with Asheville and Greenville, is a 24-hour shift followed by 72 hours off bringing the current work week from 56 hours down to 42 hours, dramatically reducing sleep deprivation, cancer, substance abuse and more. This would take hiring a 4th shift for CFD who currently has 3 shifts. Is this something you would support on a multi year plan of implementation?

Absolutely yes. And I absolutely agree with the reasoning behind it.

6. Community and Political Support

How do you plan to publicly and politically support firefighters both in council chambers and in the community at large?

Consistently! Without any hemming and hawing.

7. Growth and Staffing

As Charlotte continues to grow, how will you ensure the fire department keeps pace in terms of staffing, to stay NFPA 1710 Compliant, station expansion, and emergency response capabilities?

I'll work symbiotically with you, listen to your growing needs and remain a staunch advocate before the council for the same.

8. Support for Local 660

Have you previously worked with or supported Local 660 or other labor organizations? How would you include us in key decisions that impact our profession? Would you have open communications with Local 660 including during the budget cycle?

Yes, I've served labor unions and similar orgs as an ombudsman. As stated above, I'd directly include you. I have proposed a co-mayoral council of spokesperson from all city departments, neighborhoods, demographics et cetera with whom I'll regularly meet outside of city council meetings. Therefrom, I'll compile my own report to use in presentations to the city council to inform decision making.

Yes.

9. Adding Positions

The Fire service is inherently dangerous and is proven to cause many physical health issues. When a Firefighter is taken off the truck due to not passing the NFPA physical they are put on Modified Duty for a maximum of 5 years and forced to resign/retire. Some medical issues have a 10-year mandatory removal from responding to emergencies. Several of the Firefighters who are on Modified Duty perform

nonemergency duties that are essential to the success of CFD. These positions are not currently funded, if you were elected would you approve adding 5 (five) positions to CFD for Modified duties personnel who have been removed from the truck due to physical issues giving them the ability to not be limited to 5 years forced resignation/retirement until they can return to the truck?

Yes. This is why I have proposed the co-mayoral council, because firefighters generally know best what **you need**. Many of our current council members have absolutely no experience nor understanding of these fundamental facts.

10. Why You?

Why should the Charlotte Firefighters Association Local 660 endorse your candidacy over others in this race?

I understand you experientially. Whereas I have no experience firefighting nor does anyone in my family, our military service and experience is definitely akin to what you do. Additionally, I am doctoral level Scientist (Applied Science) and Economist and recent Juris Doctorate and thus a lawyer pursuing license to practice law (and therefore then an attorney), and the areas of science, economics and law are inseparably necessary for efficient governance. So, you get a 3-for with me as your Mayor.