

County Committee Meeting

September 16th, 2021

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5:30 AFL-CIO presentation on County Apportionment

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call of Officers
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of August Minutes
5. Communications:
 - a. Introduction of Elected Officials
 - b. Elected Official Reports
 - c. Report of the Chair
 - d. Report of the Treasurer
 - e. Remaining Officer Reports
6. Committee Chair Reports
7. Announcements
 - a. Statewide Redistricting - Cory King
8. Unfinished business:
 - a. Endorsement of November Candidates
 - i. David Anderson for Kalamazoo City Mayor
 - ii. Estevan Juarez for Kalamazoo City Commission
 - iii. Marshall Kilgore for Kalamazoo City Commission
 - iv. Don Cooney for Kalamazoo City Commission
 - v. Alphonso Harris for Kalamazoo City Commission
 - vi. Stephanie Hoffman for Kalamazoo City Commission
 - vii. Benjamin Stanley for Kalamazoo City Mayor
 - b. Nominations for endorsement
9. New business:
 - a. Recommendation: Indivisible Disabilities Month Resolution
 - b. Discussion of number of County Commission decided by Apportionment Commission
10. Candidate/Candidate Committee Reports
11. Adjournment

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Call to Action from Michigan Democratic Party and KCDP Chair:

We are only a couple of weeks away from the final round of testimony for the Independent Citizens Redistricting Committee. The Commission has indicated that they only intend to do **one round of revisions** on the proposed maps as they do not want the process to extend into the new year and each set of revisions triggers a 45 day review period.

As a result, when they submit their draft maps in the next 2 weeks, it will be our only chance to influence this process towards fair maps.

As the maps stand today, they are pretty close to the worst-case scenario for Democrats statewide. The House maps they are drawing would likely result in the Republicans picking up 5-10 seats and the Senate maps 2-3, locking us out of any majorities for the next decade.

We must make it a priority to explain to the commission how our communities should be drawn and what fair and equitable maps look like for our region and our state. That said, below is a link that you can use to provide feedback at the upcoming redistricting hearings.

[Speak up for fair maps!](#)

The Republicans will be in the enviable position of getting to say "Great Job! adopt these maps as is!" and the burden now falls on Democrats to give the detailed and coordinated feedback necessary to convince the commission they must revise their maps towards more equitable lines.

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David Anderson for Mayor of Kalamazoo

How long have you been a KCDP member?

16 years

What experience do you have that would help you be successful in carrying out the tasks of the office you are running for?

I have served 16 years on the City Commission, including two as Vice Mayor and two as Mayor, and was, for 15 years, president of the West Douglas Neighborhood Association, a low-income neighborhood in Kalamazoo, prior to joining the City Commission. I continue a deep involvement with Kalamazoo's non-profit community, including 25 years as a member of the LIFT Foundation Board and 19 years as a founder and member of the Kalamazoo County Public Housing Commission. I have a degree in Accountancy from Western Michigan University and am a licensed residential builder. As Director of Housing and Facilities with Integrated Services of Kalamazoo, the public mental health agency for Kalamazoo County, I have 29 years of experience providing a range of services for people who are experiencing life challenges. Those services include helping support an individual's mental health, addressing substance use issues, and obtaining safe, affordable housing.

How would you use your office to alleviate systemic racism against Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Indigenous Americans in Kalamazoo County?

It is the responsibility of the Mayor to stand for inclusion and to regularly communicate that, and to support efforts that bring opportunity and hope to all of those who live in Kalamazoo.

What is your definition of public safety? Do you believe the City of Kalamazoo needs to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of police presence? Why?

Public safety is an environment where people feel safe, secure and can engage with their community. Creating that environment involves families, neighborhoods, faith-based partners, non-profits, and the City departments of parks, recreation and public safety. Kalamazoo's police and fire departments are one public safety unit. I do not support decreasing its budget. We are augmenting its responses to include mental health professionals, crisis housing organizations, and experts in reducing domestic violence. I support funding these critical components of communitywide public safety.

What is your stance on immigrant rights, especially regarding DACA, sanctuary cities, and ICE?

Kalamazoo City Commissioners have clearly indicated by policy that our Department of Public Safety will not serve to enforce immigration laws, but will remain focused on building trust and providing safety for all those who reside in Kalamazoo. We believe all residents are safer when they can trust that our public safety department is focused on local issues and not national issues like immigration status. We are a nation of immigrants. I support efforts to allow people to fully access the benefits and responsibilities of becoming citizens.

Kalamazoo County has a rich Native American history that has been mostly forgotten by much of the non-Native population. What is your stance on working with the indigenous community, as local citizens and as members of a Sovereign Nation, in prioritizing educational and restorative programs?

I have had regular communications with the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians. This band previously inhabited the area that is now occupied by the City of Kalamazoo. In addressing their concerns, we removed the fountain from Bronson Park, established the creation of more historical

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markers and information sites, and are marking the four corners of what was their reservation. We have plans for further joint efforts, and I look forward to continuing our collaboration on issues that are important to all of us.

What steps would you take to improve equal rights protections for the LGBTQ+ community?

In 2009, I was one of the leaders when Kalamazoo extended protections for those who identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community. We extended protections in housing, employment and public accommodations specifically to address protections for the LGBTQ+ community that are still not included as such in the Michigan Elliot Larson Act or in Federal law. I continue to support the ongoing efforts to protect the civil rights of all individuals.

What do you believe are the three most important steps we need to take for our environment and why?

The City is evaluating its carbon footprint and developing a draft Climate Action Plan to reduce carbon emissions. A pilot biodiesel fuel program will reduce emissions from our heavy trucks and equipment. Our neighborhood infill home ownership program is constructing some of the most energy efficient homes in the state. We are incorporating resiliency and forward-looking thinking into city infrastructure projects to deal with future extreme weather events. We support initiatives that boost non-motorized transportation and energy efficiency improvements in residential homes and businesses.

The Democratic Party values education. How would you use your office to strengthen education?

The City of Kalamazoo partners with our local educational institutions, including the Kalamazoo Public Schools, Kalamazoo Valley Community College, and Western Michigan University, to support out-of-school learning and internship opportunities through summer and after school programs, as well as partnerships to support successful participation in the Kalamazoo Promise.

How would you use your office to improve affordable housing?

The City continues to integrate zoning changes that allow for smaller unit sizes and smaller lots. With the support of the Foundation for Excellence, the City is working with non-profit partners to create a range of affordable housing. We have partnered with every affordable housing development that has been completed or is under construction in Kalamazoo at this time. We provide millions of dollars in property tax relief, direct grants, and low interest loans for those who are creating affordable housing in Kalamazoo. I support the continuation of these efforts.

Would you describe yourself as pro-choice? Why or why not? What areas of women's health services and/or resources, if any, do you believe could use improvement?

As an individual, I am pro-choice. At the City of Kalamazoo, we work with our non-profit partners to help women access healthcare services. In addition, we negotiate quality, comprehensive health benefits and insurance for all City employees.

What are your top 3 campaign issues?

Safe neighborhoods, addressing gun violence and broadening opportunities for all who reside in Kalamazoo - with the clear mission of addressing these issues with a spirit of unity and shared purpose.

Have you received an endorsement from the KCDP before?

Yes. All Kalamazoo City Commission races from 2005 through 2017, and for Mayor in 2019.

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What would an endorsement from the KCDP mean for your campaign?

I would be honored to receive an endorsement. It is important to me.

Racism has been declared a National health hazard, physically, mentally and economically for black people, when elected what will you do to address those issues.

In 2020, we created the department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. After completing an internal evaluation to establish a baseline of where we are on these issues, we will establish goals that will help us increase diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout City government. The City supports a wide range of programs that are targeted to address ongoing racism effects, including free bus passes for young people, support for training, employment and entrepreneurial programs, free access to high-speed internet, access to jobs, school enrichment activities, and recreational opportunities.

Unarmed Black people are disproportionately killed/abused by police what will you do to reduce these statistics?

We have established and will continue to refine clear expectations around policies and practices in our own public safety department, and will support the City Manager and Chief of Public Safety as they carry through with those efforts, including a focus on accountability, transparency and best practices using the 21st century policing model established under President Barak Obama.

What will you do to create a culture of equity for all people in our community?

The city recently created several positions that are 100% focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion, including in the Department of Public Safety. We now have a diversity, equity and inclusion director and are undergoing an organization-wide evaluation of where we stand on those issues. We endeavor to let everyone working for the City know they are valued, and we also work to project that to the community at large. We have similar expectations from those who contract with the City and our local employers.

Please list anything else you may want us to know about you for the purposes of considering your endorsement request.

I am a lifelong Democrat and resident of Kalamazoo, and have a deep, profound belief and commitment to governance that serves all, not just a few.

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Estevan Juarez-Kalamazoo City Commission

How long have you been a KCDP member?

No response given.

What experience do you have that would help you be successful in carrying out the tasks of the office you are running for?

No response given.

How would you use your office to alleviate systemic racism against Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Indigenous Americans in Kalamazoo County?

No response given.

What is your definition of public safety? Do you believe the City of Kalamazoo needs to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of police presence? Why?

No response given.

What is your stance on immigrant rights, especially regarding DACA, sanctuary cities, and ICE?

No response given.

Kalamazoo County has a rich Native American history that has been mostly forgotten by much of the non-Native population. What is your stance on working with the indigenous community, as local citizens and as members of a Sovereign Nation, in prioritizing educational and restorative programs?

No response given.

What steps would you take to improve equal rights protections for the LGBTQ+ community?

No response given.

What do you believe are the three most important steps we need to take for our environment and why?

No response given.

The Democratic Party values education. How would you use your office to strengthen education?

No response given.

How would you use your office to improve affordable housing?

No response given.

Would you describe yourself as pro-choice? Why or why not? What areas of women's health services and/or resources, if any, do you believe could use improvement?

No response given.

What are your top 3 campaign issues?

No response given.

Have you received an endorsement from the KCDP before?

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No response given.

What would an endorsement from the KCDP mean for your campaign?

No response given.

Racism has been declared a National health hazard, physically, mentally and economically for black people, when elected what will you do to address those issues.

No response given.

Unarmed Black people are disproportionately killed/abused by police what will you do to reduce these statistics?

No response given.

What will you do to create a culture of equity for all people in our community?

No response given.

Please list anything else you may want us to know about you for the purposes of considering your endorsement request.

No response given.

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Marshall Kilgore for Kalamazoo City Commission

How long have you been a KCDP member?

4+ years

What experience do you have that would help you be successful in carrying out the tasks of the office you are running for?

As a community advocate I am focussed on uplifting and championing the needs and desires of our city. As a city commissioner I plan to contune this work, by utilizing the city's budgets and resources to succesfully administer the needs of our citizens.

How would you use your office to alleviate systemic racism against Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Indigenous Americans in Kalamazoo County?

As a Black, queer man I know first hand the deeply rooted rascim and hatred that sadly is the foundation of so many of our systems.

To alleviate systematic racism within Kalamazoo we must start by:

1. Reviewing our interal practices and systems. For example, our hiring and firing procedures. We should think: ""Are these equitable practices?"" That question can then be translated to our complete interal structure.

2. Accountbaility and transparency: As a commissioner I will push for an ongoing relationship with the public to be apart of equitable practices for all people.

What is your definition of public safety? Do you believe the City of Kalamazoo needs to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of police presence? Why?

Public safety is when we all can live and feel fulfilled without worry, anxiety or fear. I would like to have a professional review of our crime index and city law enforcement correspondence before altering our level of police response. From my level of city involvement and knowledge I would be for increasing more social workers and services rather than increasing police presence. This finding is one that our nation has noticed is succesful.

What is your stance on immigrant rights, especially regarding DACA, sanctuary cities, and ICE?

I believe that all immigrant rights need to be upheld and respected, that DACA should be protected and expanded, up to and including a clear path to citizenship, that Kalamazoo should be and remain a sanctuary city, and that ICE holds have no place in this community or country.

Kalamazoo County has a rich Native American history that has been mostly forgotten by much of the non-Native population. What is your stance on working with the indigenous community, as local citizens and as members of a Sovereign Nation, in prioritizing educational and restorative programs?

I 100% support the work of the Kalamazoo Reservation Public Education committee. As a trustee I will contune my work with our local Indigenous community. I worked hard to have a land acknowledgment statement for Western Michigan University. I am honored to be one of the authors of this statement that is now read at ceremonies, sporting events and university gatherings. We must continue to right the wrongs of the past and honor those who came before us.

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What steps would you take to improve equal rights protections for the LGBTQ+ community?

As a Black Bisexual male in the LGBTQ+ community those letters are not just symbolic to me, they are my life. I serve as the Director of Advocacy for OutFront Kalamazoo. We are Southwest Michigan's leading LGBTQ+ center, partnering with our community to tap into our inherent power. We have done a lot of work here in Kalamazoo to help our community, such as: 2009's anti-discrimination ordinance. I will continue to push for equity for all folks no matter how they identify or who they love as a city commissioner. I will be a strong "no" vote on any local legislation that impedes human rights.

What do you believe are the three most important steps we need to take for our environment and why?

1. Working towards one hundred percent clean energy--, this should be seen in our buildings and transportation--we should work towards being carbon neutral by 2030.

2. Taking on environmental racism--- we need an investment of upwards of a trillion + dollars to be put into some of our most vulnerable communities. These communities are usually seen within our city and made up of people of color. Your quality of life, air and water should not be determined by the color of your skin.

3. Support the Green New Deal

The Democratic Party values education. How would you use your office to strengthen education?

I previously ran to be a trustee for our local school board. I decided to run, because I view education as an elixir that has saved and changed the lives of so many. I firmly believe every child should have access to a high-quality public school education. When our public education system is strong it then uplifts our local economy and gives all of our students the tools and skills they need to not just live, but thrive in our communities. I will vote to uplift our educators, students and their families. I will vote no on any local legislation that impedes on quality public education.

How would you use your office to improve affordable housing?

As a city commissioner I will vote yes on local legislation that supports affordable housing efforts such as the small homes program in Kalamazoo.

Would you describe yourself as pro-choice? Why or why not? What areas of women's health services and/or resources, if any, do you believe could use improvement?

Yes, I am proudly pro-choice and believe that women are deserving of bodily autonomy.

What are your top 3 campaign issues?

- "1. Protecting the environment
2. Rebuilding, Revamping and Revitalizing our city
3. Creating a Kalamazoo for everyone "

Have you received an endorsement from the KCDP before?

Yes Kalamazoo public schools, 2020

What would an endorsement from the KCDP mean for your campaign?

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hundreds of voters in Kalamazoo County who identify as progressives and Democrats look to the leadership of the KCDP to appropriately vet Democratic candidates and make a sound endorsement. Their advice on who to vote for in elections is valued and honored by many in our community. As a candidate who has spent countless hours party building, fundraising, recruiting, training, and campaigning for Democratic candidates throughout Kalamazoo County, I would be honored to receive the KCDP endorsement for city commissioner.

Racism has been declared a National health hazard, physically, mentally and economically for black people, when elected what will you do to address those issues.

I would make sure our budget and resources are directed towards places where we see racism frequently. For example, our current pandemic has further shown us that we as people of color are in dire need of help in terms of health services and affordable housing. I will push for our federal and local funds to be used to alleviate these disparities.

Unarmed Black people are disproportionately killed/abused by police what will you do to reduce these statistics?

As a Black man, this disparity is real, alarming and deeply personal. In order to truly combat this we must look into our hiring, retention, firing and training practices for our law enforcement. We must make sure those who are sworn to serve and protect us are committed to doing just that. This will require updating practices at many levels in law enforcement locally. I also would support a non-violent response team that could help with community relations that are not high risk.

What will you do to create a culture of equity for all people in our community?

A culture of equity requires all of us having a voice and a seat at the table. To contribute to this, as a city commissioner I will make sure that all residents can be both seen and heard in all important city matters.

Please list anything else you may want us to know about you for the purposes of considering your endorsement request.

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Don Cooney for Kalamazoo City Commission

How long have you been a KCDP member?

44 years

What experience do you have that would help you be successful in carrying out the tasks of the office you are running for?

2 years Vice Mayor; 20 years Commissioner; more than 50 years activism for justice; Ph.D. in Social Work and Social Research; teach courses on Social Policy, community organizing, Social change; work with many local organizations including Mothers of Hope, Communities in Schools, Meals on Wheels.

How would you use your office to alleviate systemic racism against Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Indigenous Americans in Kalamazoo County?

The City must act to remove all traces of discrimination in public policy and that is not enough. The history of oppression and racism deeply influences the lives of People of Color today. We must repair the damage. The top priority of the City should be to use its resources and staff to provide the supports these families need for a fully human life.

What is your definition of public safety? Do you believe the City of Kalamazoo needs to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of police presence? Why?

Public safety means first that that people should not be subject to or fear violence for themselves and their loved ones.

I think the issue is who are the police and what are they doing. Recruiting a diverse Public Safety Department is essential. Making sure Police are aware of the history of past and present discrimination and the issue of implicit bias is crucial. Strong Police- Community relations are essential as is accountability. Tasks traditionally handled by Police could better be performed by other Professionals or technology.

What is your stance on immigrant rights, especially regarding DACA, sanctuary cities, and ICE?

I strongly support legalization and a path to Citizenship for DACA young people and for the families who have lived here for many years and been good neighbors and citizens.

I have worked in the sanctuary movement and am a strong supporter.

The City has no responsibility to work with ICE.

Kalamazoo County has a rich Native American history that has been mostly forgotten by much of the non-Native population. What is your stance on working with the indigenous community, as local citizens and as members of a Sovereign Nation, in prioritizing educational and restorative programs?

I was a strong, outspoken advocate for the removal of the Bronson Park statue that so offended Native Americans. That was to be accompanied by a vigorous education campaign to raise consciousness about our history and the present situation of Native Americans. I think we could do much better on this. I have worked with the Native American community often in the past. I am anxious to meet with them again about next steps.

What steps would you take to improve equal rights protections for the LGBTQ+ community?

I was a strong Advocate for the enactment of the Human Rights Ordinance in the City and have been an active ally with this community. I will work closely with Out Front and other local experts on their issues.

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What do you believe are the three most important steps we need to take for our environment and why?

Climate Change is the great issue of our time.

First, the City should be a model by assuring sustainability in all its buildings and vehicles, and by removing investments from carbon polluting industries like coal and oil;

Second, the City should cooperate fully with local environmental activist organizations in raising consciousness among our citizens and promoting sustainable practices.

Third, the City should join with the National Association of Cities to advocate for strong environmental policies at the National Level. that is where change is most urgent.

The Democratic Party values education. How would you use your office to strengthen education?

I have been a teacher for 51 years at the High School, College and University levels. I ran a program to help inner-city, minority High School students get to College. With Commissioner Ed Gordon I started the Communities in Schools program in the City and I am still a Board Member of this excellent Organization.

I understand the value of education

I will strongly support the work of KPS, The Promise, Communities in Schools and other Organizations. .

I will strongly advocate for stronger support from Western Michigan University in our schools.

How would you use your office to improve affordable housing?

This is a huge issue for the City. We do not have enough affordable units and we must utilize every resource we have to remedy this. The City cannot solve this problem by itself. We must strongly advocate for the Federal Government to get seriously involved in this issue. The City has excellent Organizations working on this issue and the City must give them full support.

The homeless are not about to disappear . Listen to them and the people who work with them. Give them the support they need.

Would you describe yourself as pro-choice? Why or why not? What areas of women's health services and/or resources, if any, do you believe could use improvement?

I respect a woman's right to choose.

Poverty has devastating effects on a woman's physical and mental health. Ending poverty is crucial.

Cradle Kalamazoo is doing wonderful work along with our Hospitals to support women and children. The City should support this work. The City should be a strong advocate for National Policies that women

need like making permanent the Child Allowance, free child care.. The City should dramatically increase after school activities to support families.

What are your top 3 campaign issues?

Ending economic inequality, Repairing the legacy of racism, affording all people access to what they need for a fully human life.

Have you received an endorsement from the KCDP before?

Yes 2017- Commission; 2008, 2010 for Congress

What would an endorsement from the KCDP mean for your campaign?

I would greatly enhance my chances.

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Racism has been declared a National health hazard, physically, mentally and economically for black people, when elected what will you do to address those issues.

First, listen to the people. They are the experts in their own lives and know best the supports they need. Second, identify best practices in Cities around the nation working to end racism and poverty. Third, build on the amazing resources already in the City. City Government should be the catalyst to mobilize these great resources for a collective response to poverty and racism.

Unarmed Black people are disproportionately killed/abused by police what will you do to reduce these statistics?

We need a short term and long term approach. Short term; make it clear that violence will not be tolerated in the City. We need a carrot and stick approach as the City is using in its Group Violence Prevention Strategy and by utilizing Interrupters who know the streets and can intervene. These programs need more funding.

Long term, the answer is ending poverty and racism and giving each person access to resources needed to succeed.

What will you do to create a culture of equity for all people in our community?

Equity does not just mean all people are treated the same. That ignores the damage done by racism, and economic exploitation. Equity recognizes that we need to understand history and begin to repair the damage. This means public policy, the expenditure of resources, advocacy must have a preferential option for those who have suffered from past public policy. All of us do better when all of us do better.

Please list anything else you may want us to know about you for the purposes of considering your endorsement request.

Only 2 present Commissioners will remain in Office after this election. They are in their first term. My experience could be very useful to the City

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Alphonso Harris for Kalamazoo City Commission

How long have you been a KCDP member?

No response given.

What experience do you have that would help you be successful in carrying out the tasks of the office you are running for?

No response given.

How would you use your office to alleviate systemic racism against Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Indigenous Americans in Kalamazoo County?

No response given.

What is your definition of public safety? Do you believe the City of Kalamazoo needs to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of police presence? Why?

No response given.

What is your stance on immigrant rights, especially regarding DACA, sanctuary cities, and ICE?

No response given.

Kalamazoo County has a rich Native American history that has been mostly forgotten by much of the non-Native population. What is your stance on working with the indigenous community, as local citizens and as members of a Sovereign Nation, in prioritizing educational and restorative programs?

No response given.

What steps would you take to improve equal rights protections for the LGBTQ+ community?

No response given.

What do you believe are the three most important steps we need to take for our environment and why?

No response given.

The Democratic Party values education. How would you use your office to strengthen education?

No response given.

How would you use your office to improve affordable housing?

No response given.

Would you describe yourself as pro-choice? Why or why not? What areas of women's health services and/or resources, if any, do you believe could use improvement?

No response given.

What are your top 3 campaign issues?

No response given.

Have you received an endorsement from the KCDP before?

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No response given.

What would an endorsement from the KCDP mean for your campaign?

No response given.

Racism has been declared a National health hazard, physically, mentally and economically for black people, when elected what will you do to address those issues.

No response given.

Unarmed Black people are disproportionately killed/abused by police what will you do to reduce these statistics?

No response given.

What will you do to create a culture of equity for all people in our community?

No response given.

Please list anything else you may want us to know about you for the purposes of considering your endorsement request.

No response given.

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Stephanie Hoffman for Kalamazoo City Commission

How long have you been a KCDP member?

One month

What experience do you have that would help you be successful in carrying out the tasks of the office you are running for?

I currently serve as Executive Director of Open Doors Kalamazoo, a local non-profit housing corporation, as well as Housing Co-Chair for ISAAC, Co-Chair of an anti-racism team. I have worked since 2017 on the Housing Equity Ordinance (Chapters 18 and 18a) within the city of Kalamazoo which passed unanimously on September 8, 2020. I also co-chaired the successful Home for All campaign for a new county-wide millage to address housing within the county. I believe my experience working with low/no-income community members gives me an insight into the effects of how policy and systems have done a disservice to the most marginalized members of our community.

How would you use your office to alleviate systemic racism against Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Indigenous Americans in Kalamazoo County?

Given that I am a proud black woman, I believe my lived and professional experience has destined me to speak from a place of authenticity and compassion. This country was not discovered, but stolen from Indigenous brothers and sisters. Black folk in particular were brought here to build the infrastructure and create wealth for others. It is this very system that needs to be disrupted and created with a lens of equity, justice, and inclusion for all.

What is your definition of public safety? Do you believe the City of Kalamazoo needs to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of police presence? Why?

Public safety is here to protect and serve ALL residents of this city. This includes undocumented, refugees, and those seeking asylum. More importantly, public safety has a responsibility to curb the gun violence happening in our core neighborhoods. Again, systems and policies that do not protect the very residents it was designed to protect must be addressed and corrected. We do not need to increase police presence, however, we do need the presence to look like the neighborhoods in which they serve. Let's get creative!

What is your stance on immigrant rights, especially regarding DACA, sanctuary cities, and ICE?

I serve community members currently who have DACA status and/or are undocumented. Here's the deal: they are going to work everyday and paying taxes, so in the grand scheme of things the only thing lacking is a certificate saying you are worth of being here? Not so. If you read this you see I am referring to all as residents and NOT citizens. Kalamazoo has an opportunity to do something very creative on so many levels, so why aren't we doing? Let's take care of all of our residents with dignity, respect, and love...a love of humanity.

Kalamazoo County has a rich Native American history that has been mostly forgotten by much of the non-Native population. What is your stance on working with the indigenous community, as local citizens and as members of a Sovereign Nation, in prioritizing educational and restorative programs?

Given that people of color have always been the last to receive any consideration for justice, equity, or inclusion, I am for raising our brothers and sisters of color up by any means necessary. I whole-heartedly

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support any work that will lift us up and bring awareness to the wrongs perpetrated onto our original residents of the city of Kalamazoo.

What steps would you take to improve equal rights protections for the LGBTQ+ community?

For me, this is a no-brainer. We were all uniquely designed to come to the earth to serve a purpose bigger than ourselves. Every human being must have the rights that allow for the best quality of life ever. It is up to the collective to fight when all are not included, based on anything other than humanity.

What do you believe are the three most important steps we need to take for our environment and why?

This is a question I am not well versed in, so I don't want to speak on a level that I'm not as familiar with. I will need to research and come back to this.

The Democratic Party values education. How would you use your office to strengthen education?

Education is part of the foundation of success, but not the only way out of poverty. We need to definitely invest more into early-childhood education, as well as education for parents who have not finished high school. When I think of the Kalamazoo Promise and the number of students of color who are not taking advantage of the gift, we have to recognize that many students of color are still not operating from an equitable vantage point. I believe we not only need to invest in the students, but also in the parents.

How would you use your office to improve affordable housing?

Housing is my passion. First off, housing is a human right. As it pertains to Kalamazoo, black folk make up 11% of the population. However, we are nearly 60% of the homeless population. We are experiencing a housing shortage in the county; not just the city. When developers come into our city, we need to mandate that bonafide affordable units are attached to ANY development happening within the city limits. I will fight for dismantling systems and policies that no longer serve our community's highest good and institute policies and systems that are inclusive and justice driven for all.

Would you describe yourself as pro-choice? Why or why not? What areas of women's health services and/or resources, if any, do you believe could use improvement?

I would describe myself as a woman who believes each individual woman should have the authority to address her own needs. When you look at the death rates of black babies, vs. white babies in Kalamazoo, you must recognize there is racist policies in play. We have to hold healthcare providers to a standard that black babies matter no matter the mother's experience of circumstance. The quality and intention given to women of color is paramount. Healthcare systems need to dig deep and really begin to serving through an anti-racist lens. It's work, but worth it to our mothers of color.

What are your top 3 campaign issues?

1. Housing as a human right. 2. Dismantling/disrupting racist policies at the systemic level. 3. Gun violence prevention.

Have you received an endorsement from the KCDP before?

No

What would an endorsement from the KCDP mean for your campaign?

I believe an endorsement from the KCDP would give me more exposure and self-confidence in my quest to serve this community with dignity and respect. I have been working in the housing sector for over 25

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years and see how systems and policies continue to deny not only BIPOC residents, but low-income/no-income families and individuals access to basic human necessities; I really want to turn that down and be a part of creating something new and powerful for all.

Racism has been declared a National health hazard, physically, mentally and economically for black people, when elected what will you do to address those issues.

Unarmed Black people are disproportionately killed/abused by police what will you do to reduce these statistics?

What will you do to create a culture of equity for all people in our community?

Please list anything else you may want us to know about you for the purposes of considering your endorsement request.

As a black woman serving this community, I will continue to fight, advocate, and let every person I meet or who is introduced to my sphere of influence, that they matter, are worthy, valuable, and are not their circumstance. I am going to continue fighting for justice either way. Peace & Blessings, Stephanie

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Benjamin Stanley for Kalamazoo City Mayor

How long have you been a KCDP member?

One month.

What experience do you have that would help you be successful in carrying out the tasks of the office you are running for?

determination, persistence, ambitious, caring, listening skills, consistent. been a board member numerous times, held elected office a number of times, been a leader in many ways in areas others don't always want to take a stance on. looking to improve transparency and push for mental health opportunities for EVERYONE in kalamazoo. thank you for your consideration.

How would you use your office to alleviate systemic racism against Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Indigenous Americans in Kalamazoo County?

i will actively not support racism

What is your definition of public safety? Do you believe the City of Kalamazoo needs to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of police presence? Why?

we need a new approach, not necessarily a complete tear down. I believe this can be addressed with increased mental health, as well as opportunities for those in need. I believe everyone needs a mix of positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, positive punishment, as well as negative punishment... not just the fear of arrest, jail, fines or social pressure to change behavior, but also positive opportunities.

What is your stance on immigrant rights, especially regarding DACA, sanctuary cities, and ICE?

i love the idea of being able to travel to any country i please. how can we make it so i can travel to, move to, work in... etc... any sovereign boundary?

Kalamazoo County has a rich Native American history that has been mostly forgotten by much of the non-Native population. What is your stance on working with the indigenous community, as local citizens and as members of a Sovereign Nation, in prioritizing educational and restorative programs?

is this the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish? i don't know a ton about them, but having worked with native tribes while i was in college i feel i have a strong support of our local native communities. i hope to learn more and support in any way i can to include this culture as much as we can in what this city does

What steps would you take to improve equal rights protections for the LGBTQ+ community?

treat everyone equally

What do you believe are the three most important steps we need to take for our environment and why?

- 1.) promote a culture of loving our environment, starting with how awesome our river is, find ways to get folks to interact with the river.
- 2.) help promote new ways to use our parks.
- 3.) big fan of trees, id like to have a better handle on our tree situation

The Democratic Party values education. How would you use your office to strengthen education?

so many ways, expand opportunities mostly

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How would you use your office to improve affordable housing?

so many ways, help people stay in their homes seems to need to be a higher priority IMO

Would you describe yourself as pro-choice? Why or why not? What areas of women's health services and/or resources, if any, do you believe could use improvement?

i heard there is a kalamazoo company that has developed a male contraception shot in the arm. not sure if this would play into this question or not.

What are your top 3 campaign issues?

- 1.) mental health
- 2.) transparency
- 3.) so many other things

Have you received an endorsement from the KCDP before?

No

What would an endorsement from the KCDP mean for your campaign?

promote a message of togetherness

Racism has been declared a National health hazard, physically, mentally and economically for black people, when elected what will you do to address those issues.

Unarmed Black people are disproportionately killed/abused by police what will you do to reduce these statistics?

What will you do to create a culture of equity for all people in our community?

Please list anything else you may want us to know about you for the purposes of considering your endorsement request.

i have two wonderful pups named mazie and daisy. i have long hair and a beard. macaroni and cheese is my favorite food. i drive a station wagon, and a bike (i prefer biking, my dogs prefer driving (windows open) or long boarding), big proponent of mental health as well as transparency. i cant afford to finish my degree without going into massive debt. housing should be a right. i love sailing. chocolate chips are the best type of cookie 🍪, everyone should have the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to live a successful and satisfying life.

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Resolution Recognizing October 17 through October 23 2021 as Invisible Disabilities Month

WHEREAS, About 20% of people live with a condition which could be considered an invisible or hidden disability. That amounts to approximately 66 million Americans;

WHEREAS, nearly half of Americans are living with a chronic medical condition, totaling 165 million people. Many particular disabilities, mental health conditions, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, and injuries can all be considered invisible disabilities and they impact people from minor impairments to completely disabling;

WHEREAS, the term invisible disabilities as created and defined by IDA, distinguishes disabilities not readily apparent based upon just looking at a person, leading this person to fight a battle seldom acknowledged by the outside world;

WHEREAS, without the obvious signs of disability, many of those with invisible disabilities are accused of faking and exaggerating their conditions. This translates to a lack of funding, accommodations, medical resources, and overall support;

WHEREAS, the Invisible Disabilities Association strives to encourage, educate, and connect people and organizations touched by illness, pain and disability. With the help of IDA, we may envision a world where people living with illness, pain, and disability will be Invisible No More;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED; that the Kalamazoo County Democratic Party recognizes Invisible Disabilities Week from October 17, 2021 to October 23, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Kalamazoo County Democratic Party

09.09.2021

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Agreement for Consulting Services between the Kalamazoo County Democratic Party (KCDP) and Mariah Phelps as ratified on January 21st, 2021

This agreement between the Kalamazoo County Democratic Party (KCDP) and elected Chair Mariah Phelps (Independent Contractor) is effective between January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 with an option to renew/renege for 2022 regardless of the date this Agreement is signed by the parties.

The KCDP agrees to pay a monthly stipend of \$1,500 on the 1st day of the month to Chair Mariah Phelps provided that the total bank accounts balance is over \$5,000 on the first day of that month. This monthly stipend is for work associated with being the elected KCDP Chair in exchange for the following services. Any funds for reimbursement of expenses related to KCDP business will be submitted to the Officers for approval:

- Perform the duties as specified in the KCDP By-Laws.
- Develop and successfully implement a fundraising plan for the KCDP for 2021. This includes raising funds necessary to conduct the business and operations of the KCDP.
- Work with the Finance Committee to create the 2021 KCDP budget.
- Form and foster relationships with donors, members, and allies of the KCDP to strengthen the organization.
- Lead development of strategic plans for the KCDP.
- Work with the KCDP Treasurer to prepare for quarterly financial reviews by the Officers and Trustees of the Executive Committee.
- Serve on the Kalamazoo County redistricting committee.
- Maintain consistent, positive relationships with the Michigan Democratic Party, local, State and other elected officials, and with other local stakeholders.
- Represent and speak on behalf of the KCDP in the Kalamazoo County community and media consistent with the values and mission of the KCDP and the MDP.
- Ensure that passwords used for Party business are available to the appropriate authorized individuals including access to voter information and data bases consistent with the KCDP Bylaws and the MDP Bylaws.
- Manage and support the activities of the other KCDP officers.
- Manage and support the activities of committee chairs including:
 - Support and guide volunteers with appropriate training.
 - Recruit, welcome, educate, and involve new members.
 - Ensure that expenses related to marketing and the maintenance of the Party's intellectual property (i.e. domain name, Google account, social media, etc.)

Chair Mariah Phelps will report to the Officers that make up the Executive Committee. Should there be any issues that need to be addressed by the larger group, the Executive Committee will inform the County Committee and recommend any action needed. The Executive Committee will serve as a

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governing board and will provide any assistance to Chair throughout the term of the Agreement.

This Agreement is hereby agreed upon by:

KDCP:

Signature, on behalf of the KCDP County Committee **Date**

Contractor: Mariah Phelps, Chair, KCDP

Signature **Date**