



LAWRENCE BOARD OF REALTORS®

3838 W. SIXTH STREET / LAWRENCE, KANSAS 66049

785-842-1843 / www.LawrenceRealtor.com

2023 CITY COMMISSION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: Justine Burton
Mailing Address: 1908 East 19th Street, W115
Email Address: HappyJack8463@aol.com
Telephone Number: (785)760-2581

Biographical Information

Occupation: Caregiver for Home Instead and Founder and CEO of StopGap, Inc.

Previous Government Experience: NONE

Involvement in Community Activities: member of Lawrence Breakfast Optimist, Board Member Watkins Museum.

Positions on Important Issues

Priority Issues:

1. What are your three top public policy priorities if you are elected to the City Commission?

Infrastructure, Equity

Housing Policy:

2. What does "housing affordability" mean to you?

Having the ability to purchase a home in any neighborhood that is comparable to their buying power and that purchased property is not substandard.

3. Several studies, local and state-wide, have confirmed that Lawrence has insufficient housing inventory to meet market demand. As a result, Lawrence has seen housing prices rise faster than neighboring communities. How would you suggest Lawrence address this availability and affordability gap?

Is this supply and demand? Or perhaps we should look more closely at the developers that are allowed to build in Lawrence and discuss avenues for building homes that start at \$250,000 not tract homes. I understand the cost of building supplies has increased, however the homes that are built aren't unique.

4. ***The Lawrence Board of Realtors® believes that everyone in Lawrence should have access to safe, affordable housing and that everyone should be able to experience homeownership within their means. Meeting the demand for moderately priced housing is difficult. The City of Lawrence has identified Affordable Housing as a major priority. Do you support development policies that increase the cost of residential development? Please explain.***

Before answering that question, I would have to review the development policies. And when you say residential development is there specific areas for development?

Would you support new development policies that would incentivize new residential development meeting market demand to supply workforce housing at \$250,000 or less? Please explain.

Workforce housing, for me, has a connotation for low-income housing and that means clumping individuals in one area. So, at this point I would say no. I want to see homeowners, workforce housing or otherwise, having a choice of where they want to live not where someone thinks they should live.

5. ***The City of Lawrence recently passed Ordinance 6690, providing protections in housing based on source of income and immigration status. The Lawrence Board of Realtors® raised several concerns regarding how the ordinance will impact sales transactions and Landlords of Lawrence have filed a lawsuit challenging the ordinance. What is your position on source of income and immigration status protections?***

I Thought the Ordinance was 9960 that referred to discrimination of housing and immigration status. If a person has the ability to pay they should be able to live wherever they want.

How do you feel about going further to limit a Landlord from using a background check and/or credit history to evaluate rental applicants?

The ordinance doesn't restrict landlords from doing background and credit checks if it is applied equally to everyone. However, landlords should have the right to refuse IF, doing a background check it is found that a prospective tenant has destroyed property, unreliable for payments, etc.... This should be done on a case-by-case basis for some prospective tenants who work daily following all the rules but cannot get a place to live because of their income and/or bad credit (**I have been there**).

6. ***Lawrence has experienced unprecedented growth in the unhoused population in the last several years. What role do you believe the City should play in addressing this issue?***

First, our neighborhoods and businesses should be safe from harm and with no disruptions to their livelihood. Second, some individuals don't want to be housed, but that doesn't mean we don't help. Those who want housing should be helped by the resources available in the community. Lastly, sometimes, smaller surrounding communities that have limited resources send individuals to Lawrence and there should be some type of reimbursement from those communities.

7. ***The City is currently undergoing a review and re-write of the Land Development Code. What changes to zoning, design, historic preservation, or other requirements in the Land Development Code to you think would encourage housing development?***

Energy Efficiency

- 8. In March 2020, the City of Lawrence adopted Ordinance 9744, establishing a goal of 100% clean, renewable energy in all municipal operations by 2025 and city-wide by 2030. The Kansas Legislature pre-empted this ordinance during the 2021 session with the Energy Choice Act. What is your opinion regarding clean energy policies and how should we balance environmentally conscious policies with the rising cost of housing and utilities?**

I am not knowledgeable in this area, but we should review different viewpoints on clean energy such as solar energy, and in order to get the community involved and accepting of the process for clean energy be honest about the pros and cons of each product.

Economic Development:

- 9. When appropriate, do you support the use of economic development incentives (such as industrial revenue bonds, tax abatements, rebates, community improvement districts, etc.) to attract or retain jobs and economic development investments in our community? Please explain your answer.**

That all depends on what type of incentives, and how will it benefit the community as a whole? We have enough empty buildings setting idles all over Lawrence we don't need anymore. When you say jobs, I hope this excludes fast-food restaurants. Jobs, I define as having good healthcare, paying more than \$15.00 per hour, on-the-job training, incentives for continuing education and opportunities for advancement.

- 10. How would you propose to balance the need for economic development and increasing density in our city with preservation of the City's character and historic resources and monuments?**

The City? Is the question directed to Lawrence, Kansas as a whole? Or just sections of the city? We lack economic development in a few areas of Lawrence. To get a sense of what is best for our community meeting with the citizens of Lawrence for their input.

City Budget Issues and Property Taxes:

- 11. In terms of your priorities on the City Commission, how highly would you prioritize your commitment to decreasing, or limiting future increases in the mill levy rate?**

I would like to research this further; however, continuing to increase taxes could hinder families and retirees from moving into our community or force them to leave the community.

Thank you for your valuable time and cooperation in completing this candidate questionnaire. Your response will be greatly appreciated and will be distributed to our membership so they can make an adequate judgment on the merits of the candidates. Please return this questionnaire to our office by July 14, 2023.

Rob Hulse
Lawrence Board of REALTORS®
3838 W. 6th St.
Lawrence, KS 66049
Email to: Rob@LawrenceRealtor.com

Danielle Davey
Governmental Affairs Director
Email to: ddavey@sloanlawfirm.com