

San Antonio Express-News Editorial Board Endorsement Questionnaire
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1. Do you support providing tax abatements or incentives to companies bringing new facilities and jobs to San Antonio as an economic development tool?

I support incentives, however, tax abatements should be avoided whenever possible and must be restricted to agreements wherein the corporation follows various criteria that benefit residents and the environment, including: livable wages, smart energy practices (zero net energy use/carbon neutral), infill, minimal environmental impact, employee commuting options (alternative schedules, telecommuting, car/van pool programs, bus passes, etc), landscaping, ecological facility maintenance and custodial operations. We also need to include in the abatement contracts both a financial recouping mechanism in the event the company pulls out before the end of the term, i.e., escrow, and disclosure of the number of jobs provided along with salaries for the duration of the abatement.

2. How would you rate City Manager Sheryl Sculley's job performance?

I have not yet had the opportunity to work with her personally; however she seems to have a reputation of being competent.

3. Do you support the bond proposals that are on the May 12 ballot?

In general I believe bonds are a fiscally irresponsible way to finance maintenance. I prefer pay as you go measures. However, sometimes mortgaging one's house to fix a leaking roof is the only finance option available. That said, there are components in the bond proposals, specifically projects such as expanding Bulverde Road and building Wurzbach Parkway through the Salado Creek bed, which I question since they are symptomatic of unsustainable growth and also because of the current bills in the House and Senate that may put a 2-year moratorium on building toll roads.

4. Have you signed or would you sign a pledge not to raise taxes?

I prefer to work within the current tax base, however no one can predict the future and so it would be irresponsible of me to pledge not to do something that may be absolutely necessary in the future. However, I know that sales and property taxes are regressive taxation – the poorer you are the higher the percent of your income you pay in taxes, given that, I believe we, as a city, need to explore other more equitable means of taxation.

5. What would be your top priority as a member of City Council?

Creating a long range Sustainable Development Plan that includes: establishment of green building standards for all new development, residential and commercial; implementation of sustainable practices already proven to be efficient by other municipalities; diversification of energy production to include more non-polluting renewable sources; increase in public transportation; development that provides easy access for pedestrians and bicycles; energy efficient practices in all government buildings and public education to promote the same in the private sector; maintenance of our existing streets and infrastructure over new development, etc.

6. Do you support longer terms in office for City Council members? If such a measure were on the ballot, would you support making it effective only for council members that serve after your tenure?

I support longer terms only if three additional election reform measures are put into place: 1. paying city council a living wage, 2. publicly-funded campaigns, and 3. Instant Runoff Voting. With these measures in addition to the contribution limits and ethics revisions we made four years ago, term limits could be eliminated without risk of irremovable incumbents. If term limits are on the ballot, I would support giving the voters three options done with Instant Runoff Voting: 1. expansion of limits

effective immediately, 2. expansion of term limits effective in four years, and 3. None of the Above.

7. Do you support increased pay for council members?

I support paying city council members a livable wage as defined at universallivingwage.org. If we are to expect that our council members are free from undue monetary influence and to allow working and middle class citizens to be able to serve in this full time position, we must pay them a livable wage.

8. What is your philosophy on balancing economic growth and the environment?

Economic growth as a means to raise the standard of living for SA residents is important, but should not occur at the expense of degrading the environment.

9. Do you feel the city should pursue pro-growth policies?

If by growth you mean expansion, then no. If you mean economic growth, then yes – we need to raise the standard of living for those who already live here, not continue to bring in more population than our natural resources can sustain.

10. What regulations do you support, if any, to protect the Edwards Aquifer Recharge zone?

Enforce 15% impervious cover limits, create a list of materials not allowed to be stored or used over the Recharge and Contributing Zones, create a workable policy for dealing with fires over the zones, lobby the state government to keep regulatory power with the Edwards Aquifer Authority (EAA), and any other scientific regulations put forth by specialists at the EAA, Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance, and other citizen watchdog groups.