

**Napa County Latinx Democratic Club
Candidate Questionnaire
DEADLINE FOR RETURN: September 4, 2020**

Candidates Name: Beth Painter **Area/District:** District 2, Napa City Council

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Candidate Specific Questions

1. What qualifications do you have for the office you're running for and why do you deserve the Napa County Latinx Democratic Club's endorsement?

I am a life long Democrat and grew up in a family that believed strongly in the values of the democratic party. My parents led by example in volunteer work in our community, teaching us about the value of education and making sure we knew that voting was a obligation, not an option to take or leave. This set a strong base for me as I grew into an adult and made my own choices in family and career.

I have 35 years of professional experience in Land Use and Planning, working 9 years in County government and the remainder in the private sector. I am currently serving in my 5th year on the City of Napa Planning Commission and my 13th year on the Napa Resource Conservation District Board. My husband and I have lived in Napa for 25 years and we raised our two children here. I have first-hand experience with the Napa Unified School District (served on many committees over the years) and started my own small business in Napa in 2002.

My personal and professional life experiences led me to make the commitment to run for City Council. I began my campaign in July of 2019 and have worked hard to obtain strong endorsements and will continue that hard work as a council member.

I strongly believe in collaborative work efforts and would be so honored to work with the Napa County Latinx Democratic Club. I would seek your guidance and input on issues of highest concern to your members. I am endorsed by the Democrats of the Napa Valley, Senator Bill Dodd, Mayor Jill Techel, SEIU 1021, the Central Labor Council and many more. I believe I deserve your endorsement because I have shown through my life choices that I will work hard to build consensus in our entire community. Together we can be a strong voice for our community.

2. Please include an example of your leadership on Latinx issues? Also, what will you do as an elected official to ensure that POC and our Latinx communities are represented?

I share many of the concerns that are of importance to the Latinx community. The lack of housing at affordable levels in Napa is one example. In my role as a Planning Commissioner, I have supported numerous housing projects that will add housing to the moderate and low income categories, where we desperately need housing for our local workforce. These projects often include neighborhood concerns about increased density, more traffic and more parking impacts. I have listened to neighbors, worked with developers and offered thoughtful and factual comments on projects to ensure Napa continues to add not just housing, but quality housing that builds community. I have asked more of commercial projects in terms of their obligation to help the community, whether by increasing their commitment to housing or to disclose their programs for employee advancement. I see these as important decisions for the Latinx community to ensure that Napa continues to strive to build quality communities for our local workforce as well as increasing opportunities to advance within an organization through quality training programs.

I am volunteering my time right now with the COAD, a community wide effort to bring many groups together to be prepared for a response to disasters, currently both the pandemic and fires are crises facing our community.

3. What are your top three priorities, and how will you ensure that you accomplish those?

Fiscal health of our City: I would keep a keen eye on our budget and advocate that our more limited revenues be used to support our city employees and the programs our city residents rely upon.

Housing: I would like to move forward to establish a Napa Housing Land Trust, similar to the efforts that have been successful in Sonoma. This will take coordination with the other cities in Napa and the County, but it is a program that is worth more work to consider for our community. Another key partner for this effort would include the Napa Community Foundation. I have been involved in the efforts that the Community Foundation has supported to encourage the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). These partnerships are critical as we move forward to address our housing concerns. The City cannot do this in a vacuum and without strong community partners. I would continue to ask that the City and County work with the State on the potential sale of excess State land that would be viable for housing. I would work on short term fixes in our regulations to streamline the ability to build work force housing. The bottom line is that we need many tools in our toolbox to keep chipping away at our housing shortage.

2040 Vision and our updated General Plan: Although there are many other priorities that I might include in the “top three”, I put the General Plan on the list as my #3. This is our road map for the next 20 years and presents an opportunity to establish clear and actionable policy that will help our community thrive. We need someone with experience to evaluate viable locations for higher density housing while ensuring that we protect the existing neighborhoods that define Napa. We need new policy on Climate Resiliency, improved circulation, and creating safe streets for all. My experience as a Planner will be an asset to City Council.

Issues

4. Latinx community members are often deemed essential workers, what will you do to mitigate the effects essential workers suffer during this pandemic, including your employees?

Many efforts are underway from organizations like the COAD, the Napa County Farm Bureau and many of our local residents who volunteer their time to support our essential workers. I have been directly involved with the COAD and will continue these efforts. I would also advocate for more testing and better contact tracing services. This advocacy needs to be done collaboratively with the County Health and Human Services. Information has been shared in Spanish, but I would seek your input to ask if this information is being distributed effectively. What more can we do to inform the Latinx community about available resources for essential workers? Is the information getting to the right places?

I do not have employees, but my husband does, he is in the wine business. He works diligently to ensure all employees understand the need to wear masks, socially distance and wash hands regularly. His winery enforces these rules in both English and Spanish. If an employee tests positive, they take immediate action to quarantine, trace and work with the public health department.

5. How will you tackle the next upcoming natural and public health disaster and how will this plan actively engage the Latinx Community? What is your plan to ensure that disaster planning is culturally competent and provides language access?

I believe that the COAD has established a broad and bilingual network, ready to assist in the response to a natural or public health disaster. No one could have anticipated the level of this pandemic a year ago, so we continue to learn how to plan for disasters. I would ask for input from the Latinx community regarding the outreach we are currently making to determine how to make improvements for the next time we need to manage a community disaster.

6. What is your stance on Black Lives Matter? How do you link this movement to the needs of the Latinx community?

I am very supportive of the voices that have raised the Black Lives Matter cause and am grateful that we are shining a light on the systemic racism that has existing in this country for 400 years.

We have to remain committed to listening to these voices, acknowledging the anger, grievances, and sadness. The Latinx community may not share the history of slavery in this country, but racism is racism.

My own family, although white, experienced racism, fleeing Nazi Germany in 1938. My Grandfather was arrested in 1937, his crime was a “race defiler”. So I have personal trauma in my family that is not seen by the color of my skin. I think the more we can share our family stories and understand how and why we came to the US, the more we will find common ground and the more we will know each other. That is a critical step in building community and I am ready to listen and to share my own story.

If we begin to link all of our stories, whether stemming from the racism in our culture going back to the era of slavery, Jim Crow laws, redlining, language barriers, immigration challenges, or religious persecution, we get to know our shared experiences, which I feel is an important element in building bridges.

7. What is your stance on re-appropriating police funding? What does this mean to you in your role and what policies will you pursue to address this call to action?

The Napa Police Department currently has 8 sworn positions and several not sworn positions that were frozen in the recent budget adjustments. I would seek to work with the Police Department as these funds become available to ensure that we hire staff where we have the greatest community needs. For example, we keep hearing that we have one Homeless Coordinator in the PD who is “doing a fantastic job”. Do we need another person to assist with this effort? The City Council will work directly with the PD on their budget and can play an active role to ensuring that we hire staff or officers with the training and professional experience to serve our community.

8. Families of all ranges continue leaving our community because it is too expensive for them to live here. Many families are doing long commutes in order to work here, therefore increasing their carbon footprint, missing on important family time, and much more. What is your commitment and plan to increase workforce housing so families that work here are able to live here? And what will you do to help keep families that are living here to remain here (e.g. increase the quality of life, health and wellness, youth and children activities, etc....)

Building on my comments on housing in question #3 above, I would advocate that we seek to build more housing that is affordable. Napa, like many other communities of our size across the country built a lot of single family homes in the 1950s-1960s. Communities were growing rapidly and the desire at that time was to have a house with a back yard and a fence. But in order to get more affordable housing in Napa in 2020, we need to shift this model and build higher density housing and smaller units. We also need to acknowledge that an employee may have a choice to have a larger home that includes an hour commute or a smaller home in Napa. So our challenge is to make these new projects desirable communities with great

amenities and local services. I do think that if we continue to build more housing that is not just affordable, but is desirable, Napa employees will make the decision to live here.

It becomes even more important to provide outdoor activities and youth programming when we are building homes that are smaller. Quality of life comes not just from the home, but from the community. I strongly support the effort to build a Children's Museum in Napa, but that will take a coordinated effort between the public sector and the private sector. The same is true if we want significantly expanded park facilities. My son attended Redwood Middle School and several years after he left and went onto High School, the Raiders invested significantly in fixing the fields. This is a great example of public/private partnerships that we should continue to encourage.

9. Do you believe it is the role of elected officials to take policy steps to assure adequate affordable housing? X No _____

9a. Specifically, what suggestions do you have to make housing more affordable? And would you support requiring new developments to set aside a certain percentage of affordable housing?

I participated in the Stakeholder discussions about Inclusionary Housing in 2019. The Community Foundation and the City of Napa hired BAE (Bay Area Economics) to run a series of meetings to study how to add affordable housing to projects. A very good report was generated from this work (Inclusionary Affordable Housing Economic Analysis, Dec. 10, 2019). The conclusion was that simply adding a percentage of affordable units to a project is not the right option for Napa. But simply paying a fee is not enough either. The final report recommended a menu of alternatives. A few examples include:

- Allow a developer to include several attached affordable units integrated into a more traditional single family project.
- Providing rent restricted ADUs.
- Making a financial contribution to an off-site affordable housing project.
- Donating land for affordable housing.
- Preserving affordable units at risk of conversion.
- Converting market rate units to affordable units.

10. According to a report from July 28th, 2020, homelessness has continued to increase for the last several years in Napa County. In 2016, 317 people were reported to be homeless. In 2020, it reported 464 people. What can you do in the role you're running for to address this important and growing issue?

The top two things that I would pursue would include hiring an additional Homeless Outreach Coordinator, who directly works with our local homeless population to identify individuals who would be ready to accept assistance such as housing. Second, I will continue to provide support to the Valle Verde Supportive Housing project to ensure that it gets constructed in a timely

manner and becomes available. I believe this will be an enormous asset and I would support a second facility in the right location.

One additional resource is the State money recently allocated (\$600M) to buy hotels and motels for conversion to supportive housing. This is a relatively new funding source so I would like to research whether anyone in Napa County has taken advantage of this.

11. In the role you're running for, what can you do to help ensure that transportation meets the needs of youth, working people, families, and seniors?

Transportation needs vary widely between these groups. For youth, can we increase safe routes to school to allow for more pedestrian and bicycle use, can we increase the ability to carpool for students. For working people, can we increase ride sharing data so employees can connect with others for ride share. For families, can we encourage use of shared vehicles. For seniors, I would want to see if the VineGo system is heavily used and if so, can we expand it? I also think that our seniors would appreciate more social connections, so would ask if we could combine transportation with some other social and community connections.

12. What action steps will you take to diversify the local workforce in your city or town? Additionally, what hiring processes will you pursue to increase the diversity of your City/Town's staff, and boards and commissions?

If elected, I would support seeking a qualified replacement on Planning Commission from the Latinx community. Someone with some experience with recent land use efforts and community involvement would be fantastic. I also just reviewed the City's 2020 Equity & Inclusion Plan. According to this report, the City of Napa available workforce is 39.7% Hispanic/Latinx but the city's FT employees are only 21.1%. There is room for improvement.

12a. Do you support a policy where aspiring citizens can serve on boards and commissions? Yes No

Unless the City Attorney advises otherwise, this is a great way to become involved.

13. Racial Gaps In Maternal Mortality Persist. Black mothers die at a rate that's 3.3 times greater than whites, and Native American or Alaskan Native women die at a rate 2.5 times greater than whites, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Would you work to decrease maternal mortality among women of color, protect reproductive rights and a women's right to choose? Yes No

I have been a long time supporter of Planned Parenthood, served on the local PP Board of Advocates and have completed training and volunteered as an escort. I would continue this support.

14. What is at least one specific thing you can do as an elected official to address the needs of LGBTQIA+ people?

As I mentioned at the beginning I grew up with a culture of inclusion and acceptance. This is simply a part of who I am. The celebration of displaying the rainbow flag was a great day for Napa. I would continue to show up and be a part of opportunities to celebrate all of our diversity. The City is offering Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training to all staff. I would ask if this training could be offered to elected officials as well to ensure that the culture of inclusion is engrained in the culture of the City's work efforts.

15. What specific things will you do to defend immigration and the economy in our your jurisdiction? And would you consider making the jurisdiction you're running for a Sanctuary Jurisdiction?

Napa County was enacted as a Sanctuary County in June of 2014. The stated detainer policy is that we will not honor ICE detainer without a court order. I know that the Napa PD cooperate fully with the County Sherriff's office to uphold the Sanctuary status. I would fully support an additional layer if it was useful to specify the City of Napa as a Sanctuary City. I have and will continue to support the Napa Refugee Resettlement Fund to ensure safe housing for refugee families that we can support in Napa.

16. What will you do combat climate change in your area and promote the green economy?

The 2040 General Plan will include policies on Climate resiliency and that will provide a baseline. I have been in many discussions with the Napa Climate Now (NCN) organization about their work, which I hold in high regard. NCN will be educating the council and the community on the climate benefits of all electric construction. Moving toward all electric will take a coordinated and collaborative effort to allow for existing natural gas uses to continue, but to move us toward an all electric grid. I feel that there are both large and small things we can all do to combat climate change. I like the fact that NCN acknowledges all efforts, large and small.