

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

Candidates Name: Eric Knight

Area/District: Town of Yountville

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Party Affiliation: Democrat

Campaign ID #: tin# 85-2269806

Campaign Manager: Eric Knight

Contact #: same

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 requesting the support of the Napa County Latinx Democratic Club because I hope to partner with you in the future as an elected official in Napa County to support your efforts to inspire more Latinx candidates to run for elected office and to support efforts to see that executive city staff better reflect the makeup of the community.

Local Family Business, Knight Lumber and Fence Co. – Yountville Crossroads
Family owned from 1954 – 2002. Managed business from 1990 - 2002

Yountville Town Council, 2 terms, 1997 – 2005

Yountville Zoning and Design Review Board, 1992 – 1997

Yountville General Plan Citizen Advisory Group, chairperson, 2017-2018

NVUSD Bond Measure M and G Citizen Oversight Committee, 2004 – 2008.

Leadership Napa Valley, Class XV.

Kiwanis Club of Yountville, 25 years member, 2020-21 President-Elect.

Veterans Homes Association, Board member, current Treasurer.

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?

As a Napa County Democratic Central Committee member, I supported voter registration drives and recognized the importance of increasing Latinx voter registration because it was obvious that Latinx people are underrepresented in Napa County government. I am glad that district elections are a reality in Napa now. I am sure that after the next census there is hard work to analyze and review redistricting issues. When I served on the Yountville Town Council from 1997 – 2003, Mary Lou Holt, was Mayor of Yountville, and of Latinx heritage.

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

To always be mindful of and represent resident priorities from the Envision Yountville community surveys when reviewing and discussing new commercial and residential projects, and implementing General Plan policies, including climate action programs.

To work with Town Council to actively represent and build stronger connections with Veterans Home members as CALVET, and the State Legislature review the Home's facility and services.

To support programs and projects lead by the Town and local non-profits that make meaningful connections with Yountville residents, including Veterans Home members and Spanish speaking residents.

To support housing policies that create opportunities for people to live and work in Yountville and the Napa Valley. When we work together to promote diverse and inclusive neighborhoods then we are building a sustainable and thriving community for the future.

The theme for my campaign is “**Building Community**” because I envision civic leadership as an engaging and collaborative process that values dialogue and consensus. Josh Wilson in his song, Revolutionary, says, “Maybe I’m not like you, but I’ll walk a mile in your shoes if that means I might see the world the way you do”. This understanding of civic leadership and these values were a priority when I served on the Town Council from 1997 – 2005. I have not changed and will serve again with these values.

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?

I believe that Yountville can do significantly better to reach Latinx community members, including people living in the unincorporated area around the Town of Yountville to provide information and public resources to help during this crisis. I will challenge the Town Council and Town staff to report and provide a work plan to improve the Town of Yountville’s outreach.

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?

As I mentioned above in the last question, I do not believe the Town of Yountville’s outreach to the Latinx community is enough. As I mentioned, I will challenge staff to report on the Town’s disaster planning and to explain how those can better reach and serve the Latinx community.

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

"Do not get lost in a sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble." John Lewis

The Black Lives Matter movement is the extension of the Civil Rights Movement. I was fortunate and honored to hear John Lewis speak at a labor event at Mare Island a few years ago. John Lewis began his Civil Rights work over 50 years ago, and his life ended days after standing in the streets of Washington DC with Black Lives Matter painted on the street. The Civil Rights movement is a movement for all POC. Standing with and working with the Latinx community is important Civil Rights work.

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 Town of Yountville has a contract with the Napa Sheriff's office for police services. If elected I will talk with the Town Council, Town staff, and Sheriff Robertson to hear their thoughts on this issue. I believe that police, mental health, and domestic violence prevention funding needs to be reviewed and assessed to see where funding can best be used to help diffuse and lessen violent confrontations with law enforcement.

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....)

Napa County and all municipalities need to work together to provide more opportunities for workforce housing. Yountville will be reviewing its Housing Element in a few years, but before then Association of Bay Area Governments will provide Napa County with new housing number and we need to work together to provide that housing for people so they can live and work in the Napa Valley. I support the Town of Yountville Housing Authority's new program, the HOME Tenant based Rental Assistance Program that works with the City of Napa.

9. Do you believe it is the role of elected officials to take policy steps to assure adequate affordable housing? Yes, XXX No _

YES.

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 support the Town of Yountville negotiating development agreements that set aside 15% -20% affordable housing. Yountville has very few parcels currently available for housing development but when land becomes available it is imperative that the Town recognizes the importance of providing affordable housing. Creating diverse and inclusive housing opportunities and neighborhoods guarantees a thriving and sustainable future for our community.

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 Town of Yountville should be an active partner with Napa County and other municipalities to provide housing and services for the homeless. That should also include financial support as well.

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?

I will ask to serve on the NCTPA as I did twenty years ago. Providing affordable transportation options for people is vital so they can continue their employment. The Town of Yountville can be a stronger supporter of Route 10 for residents to travel to Napa and throughout the valley.

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?

I will have a conversation with Town Council, the Town Manager and members of the Yountville Employee Association to ask them to support hiring practices that will diversify the Town's employee workforce.

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

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, XXX No ____

Absolutely YES, I support a women's right to choose, and the effort by organizations like Planned Parenthood to offer reproductive services and health information to all individuals.

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

I support the LGBTQIA+ community and support all legislation that protects the civil rights of the LGBTQIA+ individuals. I support the Town of Yountville's celebration of the rainbow flag and would be happy to discuss how Yountville can continue to support LGBTQIA+ people.

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

I do not support the current unconstitutional Federal immigration policy. US immigration policy should value human dignity and the universal right of individuals fleeing political or economic hardship seek refuge. I support the DACA program. I am open to consider Yountville as a Sanctuary Jurisdiction after further study and consultation with other Town Council members. I would again be happy to discuss this issue with you and learn how Yountville can support the movement.

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

I support a Yountville groups effort to have the Town of Yountville pass an ordinance to ban gas powered leaf blowers and to residents or businesses to purchase alternative products. The Town of Yountville has a Climate Action plan in the Yountville General Plan and I will lead the effort to put those policies and programs in place.