

AFSCME Local 2067 City of Salem Questionnaire

Good afternoon, candidate for Salem City Government, this is the questionnaire that must be filled out and returned prior to interview for endorsement from AFSCME Local 2067, City of Salem.

Please answer the questions to the best of your abilities, should you have any questions or need additional information feel free to reach out to Doug Lantz at dlantz@oregonafscme.org

Interviews will be March 2, 2024 so questionnaires will be due back by midnight on February 16, 2024. Please email the questionnaire to Doug Lantz at dlantz@oregonafscme.org

Your responses will be posted on the local's website.

Your name: Clifford Eiffler-Rodriguez

Office for which you are a candidate: Mayor, City of Salem

1. What would your goals and priorities be as city leader?

- Reform emergency services response models
- Prioritize a reinvestment in Community Services that have seen continued cuts over 20 years.
- Shepard the city into adopting zoning and housing policies to accelerate the development of more accessible housing.
- Craft a city master transit plan that begins transforming major transportation corridors like Lancaster and Commercial to develop around more human based transit.

2. Give examples of how you've advocated for worker's rights in the past.

Actively rallied with Salem-Keizer Education Association during bargaining.

Clear in my conviction and advocacy that worker's rights are one of the essential avenues in assuring just wages, compensation, and work balance exist in our community under a capitalist model. Unions play a key role in being a partner to the worker in bargaining to that end.

3. Recognizing the value and importance of employee retention, proper training and work/life balance what do you see as your role in improving retention and ensuring that capable employees are attracted to make long careers at the City of Salem?

Proper staff training and support paves the way for an employee to carry out their role effectively.

As a city many departments have had to do more with less for decades. I first recognized working for parks 20 years ago and testifying in front of council in hopes to keep funding in place for our now long gone public pools.

Employees need to feel valued and that their work matters. It can be a grind. Ensuring that the mayor's office and city council are delivering clear objectives that are attainable by employees at the city is an essential function of the position.

4. Given increasing inflation, projected labor shortages, crumbling infrastructure and expanding issues related to the unsheltered in our City, how would you prioritize conflicts in the City's budget?

While this is framed as competing interests requiring the attention from one pot of money, it's important to understand we need to shift priorities to drive the outcomes being asked of city by Salemites.

I believe we largely have those tools and in that light with priority being given to projects, programs, and departments that deliver results.

5. We believe that public services should have public oversight, even when that service is being contracted out. How will you ensure there is public oversight of contracted work? What are your thoughts on protecting wages and promoting safety standards of contracted workers?

Public oversight is necessary to have the public's trust. The city does a fairly good job at being transparent, one step it needs to take is to make information more accessible to inquiring citizens. When the city needs to contract out it's needs, it's largely a capacity issue. Which is to say, while we may not have the current personnel to carry out certain tasks, it's very important for the responsible departments to continue to publish clear and accurate information. Otherwise, we seek eroding the trust of folks we se strive to serve.

When it comes to worker's rights, it's important to contract work with agencies willing to uphold the same safety standards we expect city employees to follow and receive protection of. The last thing needed is to open up the city to liability when we apply different standards and expend limited resources cleaning up those errors.

As to wages, it's important that we remain competitive and realistic to the cost of carrying out city services under contract. Fair wages never should be a question in exchange for the labor rendered.

6. Why are you interested in our endorsement?

Because I'm invested in delivering results for the people who live and work in Salem. And I would be remiss to not want the support of those working FOR Salem. While I never had the privilege of joining the union, my career started in the same offices and parks, that many of you continue to serve. I'm seeking not only an endorsement but a partnership as we venture down what may be one of the trickiest periods we have faced in this city. I couldn't think of better allies to ask for help from.

7. What do you want our members to know about you and your plans?

My plans are your plans. I grew up here and since moved back to live in Salem. I put in hours every week making sure my family is cared for and spending my time thinking of how to make this city better. That started long ago as a parks employee and continues to take shape in this run. I only hope this is the first of many interactions that can help Salem find it's footing and push forward as a regional leader.