

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: Shane Matthews

Office for which you are a candidate: Salem City Council Ward 3

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

Salem is where I was raised and I have countless cherished memories from growing up here to now witnessing my own children's growth and success in this place we call home. This city has shaped me, and that's why I'm so passionate about giving back. We've faced challenges, and there's no denying we're in a tough spot right now. But together, with understanding, dedication, and common-sense solutions, we can turn things around.

Our community deserves a city council that listens and acts in the best interests of the people. Whether it's ensuring every hard-earned penny is well spent, creating a safe environment for our families, or supporting the local businesses that make Salem unique, I am committed to making a difference. Our journey is about more than politics— it's about heart, home, and hope.

If elected, my priorities would be focused on public safety, finding real solutions for our homeless crisis, and making sure that the city provides the services residents need at a cost they can afford.

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

Being self employed and at Salem Health before that, I have not had a ton of exposure personally to working under a union umbrella. That said, my wife is a teacher with the Salem-Keizer school district and a member of the Salem-Keizer Education Association (SKEA) who now are in contract negotiations with the district.

Through that process I have been very involved in keeping apprised of the status of the negotiations, personally meeting with the union leadership from both SKEA and ASK-ESP, and attending rallies in support of the teachers' position for livable wages, a safer environment, and smaller class sizes.

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?

As a young dad of three, work/life balance is important to me. Council needs to set the tone for the expectation for how management treats employees, to ensure that we can retain the brightest and best. The

City is an important employer in our community and as councilor I would be committed to ensuring employees feel respected and valued for the work they do.

I opposed the payroll tax. That said, I believe employees should be paid well for the work they do, we need to have better priorities within the city budget.

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?

Obviously, the recent overwhelming failure of the payroll tax was a clear indication that the community is tired of just being a bank account for city leadership. The workers of our community are calling for us to do better with the resources we have, before they are willing to spend more money. Few disagree on the major issues: Homelessness, Public Safety, and Housing. The problem is that these are the same issues that have been around for several election cycles. They are not getting better, so we need to pivot.

Approximately \$20,000,000 was spent in FY2023 toward our current housing first homeless effort. We did not get a result that warranted that amount of money. It doesn't take an expert to understand the concept of negative ROI. The housing first model is not working effectively or efficiently. Even in concept the idea is flawed. Homelessness is rarely caused by the actual need for a home. It is regularly caused by Addiction, Mental Illness, and/or Trauma. Focusing on housing is most often focusing on the secondary issue as opposed to the primary issue.

When we make major advancements toward the homeless and drug use issues, we will start to see savings come in other areas. This \$20 million is just the line item budget, it doesn't include the cost other departments absorb in their budgets dealing with the same issue (fire, police, parks, etc.)

That said, I don't want to give the impression that no new revenue is needed. I just believe that we don't know how much is needed because we are bleeding everywhere and until we get that bleeding under control, we don't have a clear picture of our true budget shortfalls.

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?

Some may believe that contracting services may save money – and sometimes they are right. I'm the kind of person who wants to look at the whole picture though. Just because someone might do the work for less cost, is that work up to our city standard? We need to look at all the facts, not just cost. I would want to encourage the City Manager to review the city process regarding contracts and make sure they accomplish what is best for the city as a whole.

6. Why are you interested in our endorsement?

I would be honored to receive your endorsement. Your members work hard for the residents of Salem and I value your service. When elected I will value your input.

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

I may have an MBA, but make no mistake that coming out of high school I was not viewed as a “traditional” Higher Education candidate. I graduated with under a 2.0 GPA, no money, and really no prospects. I was lucky to be mentored by some local community members and worked hard to get through college. Like so many folks in Salem, I have hustled, trying to make a better life for myself and my family.

It hasn't always been easy. As a young husband and father, my wife and I needed public assistance to get through some tough times. Now I am a small business owner who can help provide opportunity for others. I believe I represent a broader swath of people and am not defined by a singular political rhetoric.

I am fully focused on fixing the issues our community is dealing with today and I would be honored to earn your support.