

# LPoV Candidate Questionnaire Nov 2022

## General Questions

Candidate Name \*

Shamann Walton

Candidate Website

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Why are you running for *this* office?

As the first Black man serving as President of the Board of Supervisors, I've fought hard to ensure that our vulnerable neighbors and working families have a voice in City Hall. As your Supervisor, I want to continue to deliver resources to improve our neighborhoods and serve every San Franciscan.

I believe everyone deserves a stable income, a clean and safe neighborhood, and an affordable place to live. That's why I've led on tough issues that make a real impact in San Franciscans' lives. I secured over \$20 million for rent relief and affordable housing, led the creation of the Dream Keeper Initiative to reinvest \$120 million into our city's Black community, fought against AAPI hate crimes, and mediated the process to reopen schools during the pandemic.

Born in San Francisco, I grew up in public housing in Bayview and Potrero Hill. I have worked in District 10 for decades, previously serving on the San Francisco Board of Education and as the Executive Director of Young Community Developers and I want to continue serving District 10.

If elected, do you commit to completing your entire term?

Yes

What are your values, and how did you get them?

Growing up and working in District 10, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges our communities face from long-time residents being pushed out of the city to losing childhood friends to violence and incarceration. I have dedicated my life to improving these realities in our community and I am committed to continuing to identify and implement solutions for these issues. I have fought for equity, language access, affordable housing, and community resources in our Black, Brown, and Asian communities. Seeing many of my friends and relatives move from San Francisco because they couldn't afford to stay here, I have fought, negotiated, and built 100% affordable housing in Bayview Hunter's Point as well as brought back neighborhood preference certificate holders who have moved outside of San Francisco back into these units. Equity for our communities of color, immigrant communities, and LGBTQ communities will always be at the forefront of my decisions because I have seen firsthand the inequities that exist in our communities.

What communities do you represent, and how do they hold you accountable?

As the District 10 Supervisor, I represent Bayview Hunters Point, Potrero Hill, Dogpatch, Visitacion Valley, and Little Hollywood as well as the Black, Asian, Pacific Island, and Latinx communities who live in these neighborhoods. My office and I are accessible and responsive to our constituents and we make ourselves available to the community. I have brought on staff who are from the community that we work for and we are the only Supervisorial office fluent in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Spanish so we are able to provide language access to our non-English speaking constituents. When constituents bring concerns to our office, we immediately help mitigate the issue by coordinating with the appropriate city departments.

I always want to bring and uplift the community with me wherever I go including as Supervisor. That is why the majority of our interns and past interns have been District 10 residents and this summer our cohort of interns are all Black women, majority from District 10.

What three endorsements are you most proud of?

I am proud to have received endorsements from unions and Democratic organizations across San Francisco and I am most proud of receiving the endorsement from the San Francisco Labor Council, San Francisco Young Democrats, and the San Francisco Pacific Islander Democratic Club.

What are the top three issues you will work on, and how will you implement solutions in a timely manner?

As D10 Supervisor, I've shown up every day to lead on the tough issues-- the ones that have made a real impact in San Franciscans' lives: (1) affordability and displacement; (2) public safety; (3) job security and stability. As I combat the above issues head-on, I will continue to work to address the systemic disparities in our housing, criminal justice, and labor systems to fight for our low-income and working-class neighborhoods, Black and Brown San Franciscans, immigrants, and all who have been historically marginalized.

In addition to advocating for building 100% affordable housing, I will work to address the barriers so that residents actually get access to housing. Too many of our residents win lottery housing but are not qualifying for the actual housing unit. I am committed to working on removing barriers to making families eligible for these housing units and monitoring our city's progress in getting our residents housed. Using an equity lens, my questions are always going to be about who is getting in and what are the issues that are preventing populations from getting access to city resources.

As a city, we do not have equitable distribution of our law enforcement resources. Areas like Union Square are getting the most resources to prevent property crime including pulling officers that serve District 10 to Union Square. Meanwhile, District 10 has suffered the highest amount of homicides compared to any other district, and recently, we've had two senseless murders take the lives of two transitional-aged youth within 72 hours yet there is no outcry from other public officials who are outraged by the property crimes at Union Square. While the police captains for Bayview and Ingleside Stations have been tremendously helpful in trying to solve these cases and curb violence, more needs to be done at a city level for District 10. District 10 is the only district with a Public Safety Plan available in three languages that was developed by my office through community meetings and partnerships with law enforcement agencies. This plan serves as a blueprint for sustainable solutions for violence prevention.

I worked to create the Dream Keeper Initiative to reinvest \$120 million into our city's Black community through workforce development, economic pathways, entrepreneur support, housing stabilization and homeowner support, and more. I will continue to work with city partners to push for local hiring and workforce training for San Franciscans.

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What for-profit or non-profit boards do you serve on, including political organizations?

I am a member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity that seeks to uplift Black men and their communities.

What local and state commissions or policy bodies do you serve on?

San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Peninsula Joint Powers Board, Bay Area Air Management Quality Board, Workforce Investment San Francisco Board.

Please describe specific accomplishments in your activism. What did you get done, and what was your role?

As the former president and former member of the San Francisco Board of Education, I spearheaded the effort to close the achievement gap for Black, Latinx, and special needs students and I helped secure the funding for the school district's first African American Achievement and Leadership Initiative. I worked to protect undocumented students, secured the financing and identified a site for our first affordable housing units for educators, and fought to make sure that Mission Bay will have its first school built in the next few years. I have helped decrease teacher turnover in our Southeast sector schools and increase graduation rates across the district (including for our Black and Latinx students).

As the former Executive Director at Young Community Developers (YCD), I worked vigorously to build close relationships with labor to provide job and career opportunities for residents and bring 100% affordable housing units to District 10. Under my leadership, we increased YCD's annual budget by more than \$9 million dollars and used those funds to better the lives of D10 residents by placing them in jobs and careers, developing 100% affordable housing, eliminating employment barriers, and increasing education outcomes with credit recovery and tutorial services for students.

Please list specific ways you have shown up for immigrants at risk of deportation.

I am 100% for the sanctuary city policy for San Francisco. Immigrants who have served their time in incarceration and do not have ties to their birth countries should not be deported by ICE. I have authored several resolutions in partnership with local non-profits and have worked closely with Eddy Zheng to urge the Governor and Federal Officials to pardon formerly incarcerated immigrants. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, I spearheaded the effort to implement a Family Relief Fund for immigrants and families who did not qualify to receive a federal stimulus. My staff has provided interpretation services for immigrants who are at risk of deportation on their cases and have referred immigrant residents to trusted organizations to work on their cases.

Please list specific ways you have fought against racism and white supremacy.

As a Black man, I fight against racism and white supremacy on a daily basis. As Supervisor, I led the creation of the historic Dream Keeper Initiative, a first-of-its-kind citywide effort to reinvest \$120 million into San Francisco's Black and African-American community. I also created the African American Reparations Advisory Committee to study financial compensation, community programs, and other innovative ideas and create a reparations plan for Black folks. The plan takes a long-needed look at how slavery, segregation, redlining, predatory financial practices, and other segregationist policies contributed to the racial wealth gap and crafts recommendations to improve the lives of Black San Franciscans. Finally, I passed the CAREN Act (Caution Against Racially Exploitative and Non-Emergencies) — which is now a model for cities across the nation — to crack down on racially biased police calls. The CAREN act applies to similarly discriminatory calls based on sex, age, religion, disability, gender identity, weight or height—because no one should be treated like a criminal for the way they look.

Please give us some examples of situations you've encountered where gender and LGBTQ inequity was evident and what you did or would do to address it.

In my role as a program officer for DCYF, I have fought to increase resources for the Lavender Youth Information and Recreation Center (LYRIC), a workforce and youth leadership development organization specifically focusing on LGBTQ youth during the 2008-2009 recession. As School Board Member, I have fought for funding for full-time school district personnel to provide support and resource centers for LGBTQ students. I have authored resolutions to provide protections for all students, particularly immigrant and LGBTQ students, ensuring that they are protected from discrimination of any kind, and supported a resolution for non-gender restrooms in our SFUSD schools. As Supervisor, I have worked on budgets to prioritize LGBTQ+ priorities, supported legislation for landmarks and placards for the Leather & LGBTQ Cultural District, and worked with D10 Pride to host pride events throughout D10. I have also appointed several members of the LGBTQ+ community to advisory boards and commissions.

As Supervisor, I have been honored to appoint two of my colleagues as committee chairs and ensured women are appointed to several task forces and commissions. I have had the opportunity to have a woman lead my office as the Chief of Staff and I am excited to continue to work with several women leaders in my office if re-elected. I have also uplifted women from the District 10 community to our office for internship opportunities. In particular, this year's district 10 intern cohort are all young Black women.

I have championed resolutions for menstrual equity (AB637) to ensure that all public middle schools, high schools, and colleges provide free access to menstrual products in their bathrooms. Governor Newsom signed AB637 into law last year. I have also led and passed resolutions on Endometriosis Awareness Month and FemTruth Young Women's Awareness Month to help raise awareness on chronic diseases that affect people with uteruses. I have signed on to Supervisor Melgar's legislation to extend maternity and paternity leave benefits for city commissioners. I have also created a flexible work environment for my staff who need to take care of their elderly parents, kids, grandkids, or themselves for health-related issues.

I will continue to place the concerns of the LGBTQ+ community and gender equity at the forefront of my decisions.

Amid a homelessness crisis, how can the City and County of San Francisco improve the effectiveness of our city's homelessness and supportive housing services?

During this pandemic and prior to the COVID-19 health crisis, we were seeing a rise of people living in the streets in D10. In 2020, I am proud to have opened the third SAFE Navigation Center in District 10 located in the Bayview. These centers provide safe, healthy and dignified housing for unhoused individuals. They allow for individuals to bring their family, pets and belongings with them and they provide resources like guided services and supportive housing. These types of centers have been successful in moving individuals into housing and off the streets. That is why I backed the Navigation Centers Citywide initiative, which would require every district in San Francisco to open a Navigation Center. Currently we have a total of 3 navigation centers, a safe sleeping site, RV site, and Vehicle Triage Center, all located in District 10. I think the rest of the city, aside from the eastern districts, should step up their efforts in addressing the homeless crisis including opening up more navigation or vehicle triage centers.

What is your favorite park, and why?

I may be biased but my favorite park is Bay View KC Jones Playground/MLK Pool in District 10. This is the Central Park of Bayview where occasionally the community gathers to hold block parties, BBQs, and have space for Black merchants to share their business. There's also a playground and pool for my grandchildren to play at when they visit.

Why do you want the League of Pissed Off Voters' endorsement?

I respect League of Pissed Off Voters work in coming up with very detailed and researched guides for voters and grassroots ground game in distributing the guides. I would be honored to have their endorsement for my re-election.

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Thank you for your work!



## Board of Supervisors

Do you support requiring 100% affordable housing on public land? If not, under what circumstances would you support allowing a percentage or all market-rate housing?

Yes

Do you believe the amount of real estate contributions to a candidate impacts their fitness as a candidate?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Other: .....

Do you support the City funding community land trusts?

Yes

Do you support congestion pricing for the downtown core?

Yes but with exceptions for low-income families or seniors on a fixed-income.

What are your ideas for a comprehensive plan for the city to achieve Vision Zero?

Pedestrian safety is a top priority for our office especially since we have had several pedestrian fatalities in the District over the last few years. I'm am for traffic calming measures as long as the immediate surrounding community is involved in that process with MTA to come up with a plan. I am also for implementing slower speed limits in small commercial cooridors such as Leland Avneue and 18th and 20th streets in Potrero hill, and 22nd street in Dogpatch.

What role should city government play with regard to SFUSD, and what policies would you support / have you supported to support our public schools?

SFUSD is governed by its own separate elected board and city government should not be overreaching to tell them what to do. However, the city should provide additional funding from ERAF funds to support our schools. As Supervisors, we often hear from our neighborhood schools and local teachers on requesting for more resources and we try to help where we can whether through the add-back budget process or working with the state legislature to bring in more resources.

During the pandemic, I mediated the process between SFUSD and the United Educators of San Francisco to reopen schools with added safety measures.

What is your plan for addressing the housing needs in the city's Housing Element?

The city's Housing Element needs to come from an equity lens to address the disproportionate effects of the housing shortage on our low-income and middle-income families and communities of color. District 10 has over 10,000 units of housing in the pipeline including 100% affordable housing at the site of the Homeless Prenatal Program and the maximum affordability at the Power Station project. I have been working on bringing more affordable housing into our district as well as working to remove barriers to housing so that our residents can get housing if they win the lottery. Aside from having affordable housing built, we also need to work on keeping families in San Francisco through generational homes, rent control, and taxing vacant units. The work that I do in District 10 always comes from an equity lens and we need other districts to also do this so the burden on building affordable housing isn't just in District 10.

How would you expand checks and balances in regards to mayoral appointments?

I led the effort to implement a Sheriff's Oversight Commission for San Francisco to hold the Sheriff's Department accountable and the commission has four appointments from the Board of Supervisors and three from the Mayor. I would be in favor of other commissions having this makeup.

What metrics would you use to determine your success as Board Member in four years?

Over the past four years, I have also been working on implementing local hire with tech companies, if we get this passed and be able to create pathways for young people from low-income families to work for tech companies, this would be one success. If we're able to fill vacant homes and provide more supportive services for our unhoused, this would be another success. If the homicide rate decreases, particularly in District 10, because of the measures that we put forth from our Public Safety Plan, this would also be a success.

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