

SHSC 2019 online candidate survey questions

What is your name?

Melissa Hall

1. For which position are you running?

Seattle City Council District 6

2. What do you know about the unmet basic human needs in the district you would represent?

There are so many and I do not understand them the way that people on the front lines do , but some are Shelter Privacy Healthcare Sanitation Family Recognition and Unification Identification Documents and secure storage for documents And of course the need for dignity and respect

3. What has afforded you the privilege and power to run for office, and how will it impact your role in this position?

Being married to a highly paid tech worker, having a law degree and having my medical conditions well treated are three that come to mind beyond whiteness, citizenship and being born to a "good" family where it was seen as a possibility. Running for office is weird, a lot of things have to have gone right in your life for it to be possible, but most people also have to know and experience struggle and being excluded to be able to govern with compassion and notice who is not at the table. I understand that I am very lucky, but my story is not one of just good times. I have been disowned, buried a spouse, had a very bad relationship, struggled for funds and been scared I would be fired if people discovered I was bisexual. I also understand I didn't struggle with racism, classism, or other institutional burdens and that I can understand the influence of these things, but not what it is to experience them and I will underestimate their influence and miss their influence. This is why I earnestly believe my role in these

situations is to plan with instead of for communities that do experience these pressures. I need to be aware of who is at the table but it would be a mistake to think that my experience or empathy is ever the same as having direct input from people who have the lived experience.

4. What experience do you have in listening to and amplifying community voices? In what ways do you base your policies and priorities on the needs of those who will be most impacted by them?

I have tried a few approaches to this question and none of them work. I can't really answer this without speaking for the experience of other people because while I can report what I have tried to do, I am not in a place to speak to my success in these matters. How my work and approach is received and impacts people who are not me is just something that other people have to speak to. Instead I will invite you to talk to Sherae@Hall4Six.com directly about this or I can put you in touch with people from the roller derby community.

5. The cost of health care increases every year. Recent federal policy changes have threatened the long-term sustainability of Medicaid — such as attempts to reduce funding or turn the program into a block grant — and have aimed to undermine the viability of private health insurance markets — such as eliminating the individual insurance mandate from the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or not defending the ACA in court. Given so many barriers being placed at the federal level, how would you work to improve health care access at the local level to ensure stronger and more vibrant communities?

I am interested in the Cascade care option and how the city can support that option. The other thing we can do is work to publicize open enrollment, help people enroll and even look into programs to pay premiums directly in some cases where keeping coverage is important and there is a fund source but there are barriers to handling the payment.

6. Federal policies over the last few years have created a climate of fear for immigrant and refugee communities across the country. Even Washington State, long a welcoming environment, is no stranger to these challenges, as the recent Department of Licensing scandal showed. This climate of fear impacts immigrants and refugees of all statuses, and new research shows this fear is driving immigrants away from health and human services programs they are legally eligible to participate in. What would you do to leverage local systems and resources to bring immigrant and refugee communities back out of the shadows?

The DOL information brings to light a structural issue. We designed a system with the idea that collecting information was neutral and that sharing information on request was good. Understanding that information sharing creates risk for vulnerable populations means we need to comprehensively look at what information we collect, how, why and what needs to be retained. Doing this work in collaboration with the groups at risk (which includes the undocumented but also people who are trans, people who are under threat of doxxing for internet activities and people who have fled abusers) can be a way to build trust and discover other parts of our system that create risk or are broken.

7. Over half Seattleites and over 40% of people in King County are renters. Currently in most of Washington State tenants can be forced to move with only 20 days' notice and even within the city of Seattle, there is no guarantee that a landlord will renew a tenant's lease. [For King County Candidates] As part of the King County Council, will you enact just cause protections to give tenants stability? [For Seattle Candidates] As part of Seattle City Council, will you expand just cause protections for renters with fixed term leases who are up for a lease renewal? [For both] What are your plans and strategies to protect renters?

I support just cause eviction but right now violations of the rules, like almost all violations of tenant protections are only enforceable by civil suit under the landlord

tenant act. This means people who don't have the means or the institutional comfort to sue are essentially unprotected. I want to regulate property managers as licensed professionals with independent ethical duties and with educational requirements because filing a complaint with a professional regulator is more accessible than filing suit to the populations that are most at risk.

8. In 2018, the consulting firm McKinsey and Company conducted an extensive analysis of the current crisis response and homeless housing programs in Seattle and King County. They found that our region dramatically under-invests in housing and other system-wide responses, while the numbers of people experiencing homelessness grows. They found that between 2014 and 2017, the number of households accessing homelessness services grew by an average 11 percent a year, while funding grew by an average 2.4 percent a year. The McKinsey analysis estimated an additional investment of between \$360 and \$410 million per year for at least ten years is required to make and maintain progress in solving homelessness. Such added resources would bring our community in line with sister cities and counties addressing homelessness and affordable housing crises. What are three specific revenue options (local, regional, and state) you would use to generate the necessary funds to fill the gap between current local, state, and federal dollars, and the housing and service system investments required to do the job for Seattle and King County residents experiencing homelessness?

Thanks to new state legislation we now have the ability to ground lease (or sell) city owned land at little to no cost to agencies for building affordable housing which helps them meet matching fund requirements, this is the biggest new tool in the box and one I am excited about because land cost is a big part of construction cost MHA funding should help to some extent There is some chance that the high earners tax might survive court challenge this summer, if so this needs to be a primary source for services and housing The other source is an employee hours tax which is the only tax I know of

that Seattle has ever successfully collected that it is not currently collecting. However the focus really needs to be on the need and the use. Unfortunately impact fees are not currently authorized for housing but I would like to approach the legislature with the idea that building retail or office creates a need for affordable housing and that need should be subject to concurrency review and impact fees

9. Seattle and King County are in the midst of a child care crisis because child care is expensive and unaffordable for many working families. At the same time, some child care providers cannot afford to pay workers a living wage and stay in business. What ideas do you have for solutions?

In addition to the existing programs and resources we need to look at how we might be able to create facilities that are appropriate for licensed daycare because this is a major cost and something we might be able to address (as part of an overall construction plan that includes affordable housing) in addition I want to sponsor a program to help employers build compliant programs and people who want to operate small at home childcare options get all the compliance done.

10. Survivors of gender-based violence frequently enter the criminal justice system due to their victimization, but criminal justice responses are woefully inadequate and problematic for most survivors for a variety of reasons, especially Black, indigenous, and other survivors of color, refugee and immigrant survivors; and gender non-conforming survivors. What specific solutions will you bring forward for addressing issues of gender-based violence in our city? What mechanisms would you employ to shift the structural oppression and racism, specifically in criminal justice institutions?

Fundamentally the current criminal justice system is designed with the idea of finding and punishing the person who has harmed someone. This is not very helpful to victims

who need things from a system that is mostly trained to regard them as evidence. I don't see a clear way forward to making a system not fundamentally designed for it responsive to victim needs so I prefer the use of trained outside advocates, like the YWCA to ensure that the needs of the victim are represented by someone without a conflict. In addition I think we have to set up a way for people engaged in sex work of any kind to safely report problems with clients because this is another vulnerable community, one where violence often starts, that does not feel safe reporting to the criminal justice system directly, having someone who is not an officer who is able to take reports and negotiate immunity for victims would help make our community safer.

11. Describe how you would represent your constituents to ensure there is a pathway to emergency food services for all who need it. What policies and investments would you support so that residents across Seattle and King County have equal access to adequate, culturally appropriate, healthy food?

Open door food bank support, delivery food services and prepared meal delivery for people who are unable to prepare food for themselves are things that need ongoing support and minimal barriers.

12. According to a 2017 FBI report, nationwide reports of hate crimes increased by 17% from 2016 to 2017; by 32% in Washington State, and 198% in Seattle. Within Washington State, 38% of reported hate crimes were in Seattle. The City Auditor analyzed data that reported hate crimes doubled from 2014 to 2016 and doubled again from 2016 to 2018. 54% of the crimes related to race/ethnicity and 32% sexual orientation. What are your ideas for responding to hate crime in our region without criminalizing communities of color?

Fundamentally I would like to see the outside advocate system used for sexual violence crimes be used for all hate crimes to center the victim and support their recovery as a primary goal.

13. As a city, we have moved to district representation. However, the needs of our residents are not necessarily most efficiently and effectively addressed by district. Nonprofit services most often cross multiple districts and people who make use of the services interact with providers throughout the city. How will you work to represent both the needs of your district as well as Seattle as a whole?

By centering the people in need and making sure those needs are met by any service or provider who can do so.

14. Will you support an automatic annual inflation adjustment tied to the CPI-W for the City's human services contracts so providers can maintain current levels of service as costs of doing business increase?

Yes