



New London Police Union 2013 City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Please complete and forward to: Chuck Flynn c/o NLPD Local 724 PO Box 135 New London, CT. 06320

Candidate Anna Stuller Party Green

Home Address 19 Evergreen Avenue, New London, CT 06320

Telephone 860-447-9823 Email rstuller@snet.net
/860-772-8439(c)

Are you or were you ever a Union member? YES ☒ NO ☐ (circle one)

If YES, which Union? However, I was involved in several (unsuccessful) attempts to unionize Early Childhood Workers.

What other union endorsements have you sought and received?

In 2009-2011 I was endorsed by the SECT Central Labor Council & plan to seek their endorsement in 2013. Also seeking endorsements from AFSCME Council 4

Are you the endorsed party candidate? ☒ YES ☐ NO

& the NLPD Firefighters Union.

Incumbent? YES ☐ NO ☒

Why are you running for City

Council? I am running to have the opportunity to bring fresh ideas to solve the city's problems & move it forward, unencumbered by partisan loyalties and/or obligations. My term on Board of Ed demonstrated that I can work with all parties in a respectful way.

Do you ☒ SUPPORT or ☐ OPPOSE police officers having the right to collectively bargain over working conditions?

As an elected municipal official will you ☐ SUPPORT or ☒ OPPOSE efforts to change the current collective bargaining laws that will diminish or reduce the bargaining positions of municipal labor unions?

Will you ☒ SUPPORT or ☐ OPPOSE collective bargaining as it currently exists under MERA (Municipal Employee Relations Act)?

Do you believe binding arbitration as it exists in MERA to be () FAIR or (X) UNFAIR to municipal employees?

Under current statutes, cities and towns are able to reject the arbitrator's award and send the contract back to a second arbitration panel. Unions do not have this option to reject an award. This modification to arbitrate has changed the original intent of binding arbitration, placing the employees at a disadvantage.

Do you (X) SUPPORT or () OPPOSE a return to an "even playing field" in which both parties are bound by the first arbitration panel?

Would you () SUPPORT or (X) OPPOSE any legislation that would abrogate MERA in financially distressed municipality?

Would you () SUPPORT or (X) OPPOSE any legislation that would reduce earned pension benefits of currently retired municipal employees?

Would you () SUPPORT or (X) OPPOSE any legislation that requires municipalities to balance budgets every year by abrogating collective bargaining rights?

Would you (X) SUPPORT or () OPPOSE any legislation requiring New London to fully fund its municipal pensions in the amount recommended by pension actuaries?

Would you vote to lay off police officers to balance the budget? YES NO

I don't know; it depends on circumstances. I hate to lay off anyone, but a bankrupt city would not improve it in any way.

INCUMBENTS did you vote to support Mayor Finzio's 2013-14 FY budget that required layoffs of up to 15 police officers? YES NO

N/A

Is New London () BETTER or () WORSE () SAME than it was two years go?

Some things are better, some are worse — on average, a little better.

Please list what you believe are the three biggest challenges facing New London in the next two years and what solutions do you offer to fix them?

- ① The dismal legacy of urban renewal: It is hard to list all the negative effects that persist from urban renewal. They include segregation of the poor, lack of urban density, disconnect between neighborhoods, blighted neighborhoods, struggling schools. I would work to rebuild the street grid and restore short blocks that are walkable; disaggregate big development parcels (as in Fort Trumbull) & sell to small owners; pursue ReConnect project to connect north NL to downtown.*
- ② Stretch & budget: Reliance of property tax is devastating to cities. I would lobby state & work with large nonprofits (eg Conn College, LTM) for PILOT funds to offset hosting costs; more user fees may help a bit, and improving infrastructure to attract new residents would spread out the burden.*
- ③ The next 2 years is just the start of the long term challenge to survive and thrive in the face of climate change (which may expose us to more frequent storm disasters), and the peaking (and inevitable increase in cost) of natural resources that we depend on. We should empower our sustainability committee to study and recommend solutions.*

In 2006 expert law enforcement professionals studied NLPD and concluded for the demographics, number and severity of call volume recommended 118 police officers. The city has never had more than 96 and currently has just 65.

You will probably not like this answer, but I believe that the continuing war on drugs has created this need for a large number of police officers. I advocate that all drugs be legalized and regulated, and that drug problems be treated as public health & not criminal problems. Alcohol Prohibition 1920-1933 had the same effect. Some in law enforcement agree: see LEAP <leap.cc>

Do you () **SUPPORT** or (X) **OPPOSE** an increase in police officers?

At this time I oppose. The city's resources are limited & I'm not sure that adding officers is the best use of funds. I would like to see an analysis based on prioritizing nonviolent crime.

Mayor Daryl Finizio has proposed the city spend city money on street lighting, surveillance cameras and No Loitering signage rather than hire more police. Do you () **SUPPORT** or () **OPPOSE** the Mayor's proposal?

I think that street lighting is an important environmental part of preventing crime, which is a good goal. I do not favor spending money on cameras or signage. Mayor Finizio has stated on many occasions that NLPD K9's are "racist" and wanted to eliminate the K9 program or eliminate "biting dogs" despite law enforcement expert testimony to the contrary. The City Council listened to their constituents and created an ordinance to continue with an NLPD K9 program. Perhaps a compromise position is possible on this.

Do you () **SUPPORT** or () **OPPOSE** the NLPD K9 Program? - I support a K9 program but not a dog requirement. I am in favor of search & rescue dogs, I am not in favor of biting dogs.

NLPD has been in the news for the last two years with many administrative internal issues and lawsuits, as a City Councilor what do you have as a solution?

I believe that many issues have become highly politicized rather than dealt with in an atmosphere of critical thinking & serious problem-solving effort. As a Councilor (neither Democrat or Republican) I would be in a unique position of being able to examine the facts of each issue & base my actions on those facts rather than political alliances. There are many resources available for conflict resolution and I would hope to use those methods to reduce need for litigation.

Please provide us with any additional information you think would be useful in helping us make an endorsement decision.

If I am elected, the city's unions will be able to depend on me to defend their rights as valued employees entitled to fair treatment, as well as the pay & benefits earned.

However, I have frequently disagreed with the political agenda of the NLPD's union ~~leadership~~. I was opposed to the Fast Trumbull MDP, because I think it is important to defend people's rights to their homes as well as their jobs. I refuse to take sides, politically, in the conflicts between the mayor & the union. Democracy requires a balance, and Council must provide the 3rd leg of that system of checks & balances to work.

I must also reiterate that I value our police officers in ~~the~~ your fulfillment of an important, challenging, and dangerous job. But I think that the ultimate goal is prevention of crime, and if we can find a way to truly reduce crime, then it is difficult to predict what our police force of the future might look like. My primary source of these views is LAW ENFORCEMENT AGAINST PROHIBITION - LEAP

Thank you for your participation.

(leap.cc) or (copssaylegalizedrugs.org)