



Humboldt Community Services District & McKinleyville Community Services District Boards of Directors Candidates:

Questions & Answers

Fall 2020

Questions

1. Question from Centro del Pueblo: Undocumented members of our society like all other members have experienced the psychological, economical, and health effects of the pandemic this year. Additionally, they also pay the taxes that all community members pay as far as labor and sales taxes. However, they cannot rely on the safety nets (unemployment benefits, emergency stipends, etc.) that the US government provides to all other documented citizens. All this along with the racialized violence from the white community that seems to be justified by many local and federal agents of government, have put the undocumented community in challenging times. How do you see yourself using your political platform to incorporate the voices (worries, stories of experienced violences, labor and renters' rights violations, dreams and solutions) and performing the necessary actions/campaigns towards social justice and equity of the undocumented

latinx/southern indigenous community? How will you hold yourself accountable and accessible to our community needs?

2. Question from Affordable Homeless Housing Alternatives: COVID-19 and the recent years of wildfires have continued to illuminate and exacerbate Humboldt County's housing crisis. While there are several low-income housing units going up in many areas of the county, most of them are still unattainable for those who have been chronically homeless, who have been unable to access case management support through the County, or those who are just above the low-income threshold but still can't afford regular housing. What is your position on alternative housing models such as tiny home villages, safe camping and safe parking, which can provide shelter and community to individuals who can't access traditional low-income housing? What steps would you take to partner with nonprofits and community groups to increase capacity and resources to address those without housing in your Services District within Humboldt County?
3. Question from the Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities: Climate chaos, the pedestrian and bicycle safety crisis, and the rise of autonomous vehicles all present challenges which demand proactive steps to reduce the amount of driving we do locally. While Community Services Districts do not directly control transportation systems, they do affect transportation through decisions made about street lighting, parks and recreation, and extension of water and sewer infrastructure, all of which can influence both mode choice and development patterns. If you're elected, what will you do to ensure that the Community Services District's activities promote communities which support more walking, biking and transit and less driving?
4. Question from North Coast People's Alliance: What will you do to increase transparency and public participation in your Community Service District?
5. Question from Humboldt County Transition Age Youth Collaborative, Defund Police Group and Humboldt Area Center for Harm Reduction: We are looking for elected leaders who focus on creating a structure of care and compassion that requires us to envision what a healthy community looks like. Someone who ensures that resources and processes are molded to fit the different aspects of the community as opposed to our current "one size fits all" approach. With that vision in mind, even if you do not have jurisdiction in these departments:
*Do you support the harm reduction resources provided by HACHR?

*Do you support the reallocation of any portion of police funding?

*Do you support the repurposing of the new juvenile hall currently being built?

6. Question from Healthcare for All Humboldt/Physicians for a National Health Program: In 2017 Humboldt County spent \$18 + million on healthcare insurance plans for its 2,377 employees. Studies have shown that about 1/3 of all payments to private health insurance companies is wasted on profit, overhead, bureaucratic duplication and unnecessary complexity. Obviously, this applies to other local government agencies as well. A comprehensive Single Payer system in California would provide huge savings to the Humboldt and McKinleyville Community Service Districts. What is your position on removing the health insurance burden from the Humboldt and McKinleyville Community Services Districts by supporting, by resolution, the establishment of a single-payer, universal, equitable healthcare system in the State of California? Please give the reasons for your answer.

7. Question from 350 Humboldt: To fight climate change we need to decarbonize our electrical grid by building renewable energy infrastructure, such as solar and offshore wind; transition transportation and buildings throughout the county to all-electric before 2045, and reduce the amount of driving that Humboldt County residents do. Doing this will create local green jobs and help employ people who have lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. CSDs have the opportunity to electrify their own operations and fleets, add solar panels to their facilities, and limit where they provide water and sewer services to avoid inducing sprawl. As a board member of your Community Service District, will you pledge to build support for these goals, and to work toward achieving them in an equitable way?

Answers (presented verbatim without editing)

Humboldt Community Services District

Heidi Benzonelli

1. As an elected leader we must understand and represent our community, the whole community, along with privilege comes voice and implied credential. Understanding who is not participating, finding out why and addressing those inequities can expand participation to the whole public. This takes time and intention. At Jefferson we recognized quickly that the whole neighborhood was not represented in our decision making forum (Community Created). We reached out to leaders from various cultural communities, first for translators, we began to translate promotional material, and eventually employed bilingual staff. We compare the ethnic make-up of our neighborhood to the participation in our programs and intentionally engage

when there is missing representation. We still do not have representative participation, but we do from latinx neighbors, we know who is missing and continuously reach out. So in short, make sure translated material is available and accessible, first get anyone to participate then assure there is equitable representation and if not find out why and work intentionally to be inclusive. How will I hold my self accountable? Be available, approachable, connect to established networks of support such as English Express, Toward Citizenship, and Centro de Pueblo, ask, listen and be willing to change.

2. Both the City of Eureka and the County of Humboldt adopted highly progressive Housing Elements, there are great plans on paper, now we need leaders in the community to pave the way for project implementation. Infill development is an efficient way to add housing. Accessory dwelling units (mother in law units), accessory outdoor bedrooms, tiny homes, tiny homes on wheels, and alternative housing developments all will need some kind of connection to water/sewer. Partnering, and collaborating to incentivize and streamline infill development is the key. If it is cumbersome and expensive it will not happen. We need an appropriate bed for every head in our community. Housing equity is not only about housing the houseless it is also about having affordable accessible first homes (and living wage jobs) so our kids stay in the area, having homes that are desirable for medical professionals and their families so they come to our community and keeping operating expenses such as electricity, water and sewer affordable so our seniors can retire and relax in our community. You can not work effectively on housing equity without addressing the whole spectrum because with a finite number of dwellings, as one is housed one is displaced. Infill development is the most efficient and least impactful on current infrastructure, it is already codified in our general plans, now it takes community leadership with the intention to see it happen. I am running to have a seat at that table.
3. First of all, know what work has been done and by whom, determine how much public input has already been gathered and what the community had to say. Some groups that already exist are HCOG transportation committee, Safe Routes to School Committees, The Trails Commission, Bicycle Corridor Working Group and the Humboldt Transit Authority. I, personally support the potential development of BK 101 a non motorized alternative transportation highway from Willits to Arcata along the rail way corridor. Fields Landing, and King Salmon areas would be in the HCSD district and I would support development of nightly camping areas and hostels to accommodate those travelers.
4. I would encourage continuing the opportunity to participate virtually (if it remains legal) ZOOM can open up the opportunity for parent's without childcare and to participate and still be home. I will keep my ElectHeidiBenzonelli facebook page live and post agenda items that need community input to my page. I will keep my personal Cellphone and email public and encourage constituents to contact me so I know what their interests are. I will determine who is in charge of the District's webpage, someone worked hard on it and has ownership, and will encourage use of a "self enrolled list serve" on the webpage "For Advanced Notice of Board Meetings, Emergency Alerts etc enter your email here" that builds a listserve and an email can be sent out 1X a month and reach large numbers of people.
5. *In theory, an accepted strategy of Harm Reduction "Establishes quality of individual and community life and well-being, not necessarily cessation of all drug use, as the criteria for successful interventions and policies". In layman terms, "socially acceptable". I do not believe that this strategy is a keystone of HACHR, over the years HACHR has had attention for creating a

neighborhood nuisance, having active drug use and dealing in close proximity and has had unfortunate leadership attention such as the "Booty Bumping" article. I can put myself in the shoes of the addict and there are 2 clear paths, the getting and using and finding ways and means to continue to use; and the path of recovery and finding a new way to live, in your opinion, on which path is HACHR? I do however understand the need for intervention to protect not only the user but also the community from spread of disease such as Hepatitis C, HIV and STD's and the County runs an effective mobile needle exchange, NorCap also has Prevention and Risk Reduction resources, and there are many sources for condoms including Public Health, Family Resource Centers, Planned Parenthood and more. In my opinion harm reduction resources and services are available in the community, well managed and as a result non-controversial.

* I support Community Advisory Roles and Community Oriented Policing. You can not just "move money" and change things, police culture is a work in progress. Gar Nielsen started and Andy Mills made real leadership changes in EPD. The CSET team has focused on Quality of Life for both "perceived perpetrator and victim" in some of the most notorious areas of our community. I have working relationships with people on both sides of the law and their relationships with the police are actually important ones. One day I saw an EPD car out front of work, it was about a week after our "P2E, Prison to Employment" training program had started. I ran out to intervene and let the cop know "everything's cool" and I found men with mutual respect for each other, thanking and congratulating each other and offering help and services. I have worked with Pamlyn Millsap, the MIST team and clients and know of many instances where people have gone well beyond their "call of duty" well past their role of employment to help someone who may otherwise just be considered a drain on society. 10 years ago I had a giant law enforcement chip on my shoulder but I sucked it up, worked, learned, earned and gained respect for many in local law enforcement. There are a few bad apples, some cowboys that are still there, some protected by the union and even the leadership cannot excise them, but they'll go, with lofty benefit packages because they risked their lives and are protected workers. You see, in a small community like Eureka is not just black and white, you can not say I always support or I always oppose, it takes relationship building, dialogue, community engagement and involvement, building and gaining trust and respect and then gaining ground for equity and change. We must strengthen relationships with Law Enforcement in order to do the inside work needed to develop policies and practices that actually lead to change. We are stronger together!

* Do you support the repurposing of the new juvenile hall currently being built? I do not know anything about the funding or proposed use of the new juvenile hall, usually funding is for a restricted use. I definitely do not support increased incarceration of children, as stated before, I support primary prevention, early intervention, family strengthening, opportunities for vocational training and enrichment for underserved youth, youth camps, leadership camps, the YCCC. We need more opportunities like RAVEN, HCTAY, we need youth detox and recovery beds, youth hostel/housing, job corps type vocational training with clear paths to promotion, advancement and employment, locking kids up should be a last resort! This will likely not intersect with my role on the CSD board but as a person, justice reform has been a cornerstone of my recent work.

6. I support what I know of single payer because 1) the complexity associated with multiple insurance companies and plans is administratively cumbersome and thus wasteful, there are whole buildings full of workers dedicated to just this at some hospitals, single payer would consolidate this and eliminate the associated cost burden. 2) There are still many uninsured Americans, the affordable care act was a move in the right direction but still a bandaid on a broken system. 3) As an employer, Medical Insurance is the giant hurdle, it is incredibly expensive and can bear a cost of 10K-30K per year per employee depending on different factors. It creates inequity because workers with large families and older workers are often the most expensive to insure and therefore may be passed up for advancement into benefited positions, though not legally, it certainly happens. Many employers can not advance past this hurdle and therefore it also impedes economic growth. However I would not sign a resolution blindly nor would I create a situation that could leave directors or staff without medical Insurance, even temporarily.
7. **Absolutely!**

Michael Hansen

No response.

David Haynie

No response.

Joe Matteoli

My name is Joe Matteoli, thank you for the opportunity to comment on these questions. I believe that water and sewer are vitally important services to any community. Providing efficient, affordable, and safe water and sewer services in a transparent manner is the job of this position. The questions presented to me are important social issues but don't fall under the jurisdiction of this district. If elected I will always be open to the public's input as it relates to any issues and questions. I will work to the best of my ability to represent the constituencies of the district on matters concerning water and sewer services. Thank you.

David Saunderson

No response.

Josh Sehon

No response.

McKinleyville Community Services District (4-year)

Scott Binder

No response.

William McBroome

No response.

Greg Orsini

No response.

McKinleyville Community Services District (2-year)

Wesley Martin

No response.

Joellen Clark-Peterson

1. Since I was in grade school I have had an interest in death and dying, the Holocaust and social justice - the common denominator being that I am interested in experiences other than mine. I cannot help but bring this curiosity and sense of peace and justice to every subject I encounter. As the Director of the Arcata Chamber of Commerce I sat on the Equity Arcata Advisory board and the Welcoming Businesses committee and have recently rejoined in my new position with the Small Business Development Lead Center. If elected, in setting policy on the MCSD I will try to ensure that all residents receive our services in an equitable manner. I would like to see if the District does a routine self-analysis that measures how good of a job it is doing to distribute services equitably and if they don't have such a process I'd like to encourage its introduction. I hope that the MCSD's constituents would help to hold me accountable by reaching out to me with information to widen my perspective and understanding.
2. I am interested in experimenting with village housing, safe parking and safe camping. I think trying out new approaches without having to commit to them long term is what we need to do so that we can see what works and what doesn't. I still need to explore who might be a potential partner in these type of endeavors since money is always the constricting factor.
3. As far as I can tell the MCSD is making leaps and bounds with open spaces/car-free options. The community forest looks like it may be coming online as well as the Mad River Enhancement project adjacent to the Hammond Trail, both are going to be huge assets to the recreational community.
4. People don't get involved for a variety of reasons – primarily they're content with the way things are or they are too busy with their family. The MCSD, to the general public, doesn't necessarily contend with the hottest of topics. Nevertheless, the agendas are posted and articles appear in the newspaper so those who are interested have the information. I also hear that the staff is friendly to those with questions. I have been thinking about doing a regular column for the Mad River Union since I am a journalist at heart. If elected, I will explore that idea in the hope that it takes a form that speaks to the interests of the community.
5. I admit, I am not familiar with HACHR. If the Humboldt County Sheriffs Office is anything like Arcata's or other municipalities they are already experiencing cuts to their budget and I do not think it's a good idea to further cut. I would, however, like to see the State and Feds allocate more money to mental health. I am not familiar with the new juvenile hall. You can see I have things to learn! I'd welcome the information if someone from HACHR would reach out to me I'd appreciate it.

6. I need to know more about this before taking a stand. I definitely think we need a better health care system.
7. The MCSD is working toward these goals with its soon-to-be installed solar micro-grid, its Tesla charging stations. If elected, I support continuing to move in this direction as long as its financially sustainable.

Jimmy Vance

No response.