

Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club
Questionnaire for Candidates for November 2014

Dear Candidate,

Congratulations on declaring your candidacy. The Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club invites you to get to know us better as we seek to learn more about you. As we plan our endorsements for the 2014 election cycle, your participation in our club questionnaire allows our membership to better understand you as a candidate: who you are, what you stand for, and what you plan to accomplish in office.

*There are two parts to our questionnaire. Part 1 is a series of short-answer questions. We invite you to be descriptive in this section, however, please keep your responses to under 5 sentences. Part 2 is a simple Yes/No questionnaire that covers a broader set of issues than Part 1. You may expand upon Part 2 answers on a separate sheet of paper. Please return the completed questionnaire by **11:59 PM Thursday, August 14th**. E-mail all questionnaires to PAC Chair Alex Walker at pac@milkclub.org. Please bring at least 5 copies (printed front and back) of your questionnaire to our PAC interviews on **Saturday, August 16**. If you are unable to do so, please let Alex know ASAP. Please do not print this cover sheet.*

*We will be having our candidate interviews on **Saturday, August 16** from **9:30 AM to 4:30 PM** at the **LGBT Center's Ceremonial Room** (1800 Market at Octavia). Alex should be in touch to schedule a 10-minute slot (5 minute speech and the rest for questions and wrap-up). If you have any questions or to reschedule, email him at pac@milkclub.org or call him at 415-876-8254.*

Good Luck,

The Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club

Required Information

Full Name: Wendy Aragon

Office Sought: Trustee, Community College Board

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Email: wendolyn.aragon@gmail.com

Website: www.wendyaragon.com

Are you a member of the Harvey Milk Club? Yes

If so, when did you first join? 2012

Are you lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ)? No

PART 1: Short-Answer Questionnaire

- 1) Please describe your qualifications for the position you seek (include your key issues/priorities if elected and any key endorsements you'd like to share), plus anything else that you'd like our members to know about you and your candidacy.

I have broad leadership experience working with the diverse communities of San Francisco, elected officials, community leaders and city agencies. I currently serve as President of the Richmond District Democratic Club, Chair of the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Citizens Advisory Committee and on the local board for Girl Scouts of Northern California. I have been in public service in the Bay Area for over 20 years and have been put in this position of leadership because of my ability to help move processes forward. In my profession as a Construction Consultant working with Department of Building Inspection and a number of other stakeholders, I help parties form consensus on a daily basis. I have good working relationships with current board members and my priorities are:

1. Restore Accreditation and Enrollment- City College needs to preserve its accreditation to ensure the college is eligible for federal funding. Students who are low income need federal financial aid to be able to take classes at the college. Without accreditation the college would not be able to exist as a public institution. We need a public community college to ensure that the low and middle income students can attend classes. Also enrollment is the lifeblood of the college we need to continue to spread the message that students need to enroll to save City College.
2. Identify Local Solutions to State Reforms- State reforms are changing the landscape of what community colleges look like across the State. The Master Plan for Education ensured the promise of affordable, accessible education would be available to all that would benefit. With measures like the Student Success Act of 2012 the promise of a full, open access college with a

broad mission is being compromised. City College can continue to support students to transfer and obtain certificates while offering enrichment programs to the community. If elected as Trustee I would try to identify some local remedies to what some education justice advocates are calling “downsizing” and “push out” policies. These measures are counterintuitive to what community college represents.

3. Adequate Funding for Diversity Studies, Arts, Music and Liberal Arts- Studies have shown that when underperforming, traditionally marginalized students take a diversity studies course it helps them to perform better in other areas. We need to make sure that ethnic studies, LGBTQ studies and other diversity studies are adequately funded. I also want to advocate for robust arts, music and liberal arts programs in addition to math, science and English.

2) If you are running for College Board, tell us about what you have done to support CCSF during its accreditation crisis and what you plan to do to keep it open and funded. Even if you aren't running for College Board, if you have been a part of the fight to save CCSF, feel free to tell us about what you have done to help.

I have helped by enrolling in classes to boost State funding available to City College. It's my understanding that because of the enrollment crisis, City College will lose a substantial amount of its base funding. I am aware that stabilization funding has been put in the State budget for City College but we can't depend solely on this measure for the future. What I see that often happens at community colleges is when funding from the State is cut, the classes, programs and services that help marginalized students be successful are put on the chopping block.

I decided to run for a seat on the Board of Trustees after registering for classes last fall, during the apex of the current enrollment crisis. I wanted to earn a certificate in Geographic Information Systems to supplement my career in the construction industry. I already believed that City College was a vital of the fabric of San Francisco, but I was deeply affected by being able walk in the shoes of the 80,000 other students who rely on the quality of education that City College provides them in order to create a brighter future for themselves. These students, of all ages, skill sets, and backgrounds reminded me of what I had once gone through, and I realized that I could play a role in making sure that future generations would have City College to open those doors for them.

I understand the issues that City College students, faculty and staff are I am running for this seat because I actually want to be of service to the entire college community. I have seen that too many times individuals seeking a higher political office will use the City College Board of Trustees as a springboard. During this time of crisis City College needs board members that understand the issues and are willing to be focused and advocate for what is right for the college. This means using the Proposition A funds as intended, restoring enrollment and accreditation and making sure that workers and students are being treated fairly.

3) Do you support repeal or reform of the Ellis Act? Locally, what specifically would you do to fight for housing affordability in San Francisco?

I support the repeal of the Ellis Act and support all measures on the ballot this November that promote income equality in San Francisco. I feel that speculators are endangering the diversity of San Francisco and do not care about our seniors, people living with disabilities, artists, students, people of color and low to middle income individuals in general. San Francisco has

seen an unprecedented number of heartless evictions that do not reflect the values of our city.

- 4) In your opinion, what kind of reform of Prop 13 is needed, if any? Would you support a split-roll property tax system?

I believe that Prop 13 reform has been far overdue. With the passage of this proposition we have seen a de-funding of public education and other needed services. I will support any measure that bring more tax dollars to fund public services especially public education which creates opportunity and a brighter future.

- 5) LGBTQ elders and older people living with HIV face a number of challenges, including finding affordable housing, accessing health care and a general lack of services. Many are being evicted. If you were elected, what would you do in your power to help address these challenges?

City College is a lifeline for many people that have this experience. I believe that it is critical that our college continue to have a full mission and adequately fund support services like the Queer Resource Center, the Gender Diversity Project, the HARTS program which provides resources to homeless students and our free to low cost Student Health Center which provides health care to anyone who is enrolled in City College.

- 6) Similarly, LGBTQ youth face challenges including bullying and a high rate of homelessness if ostracized by their families. If you are elected, what would you do in your power to help these youth? For School Board candidates, what would you do on the SFUSD board to help LGBTQ students who are bullied?

It is my understanding that City College has a strong policy regarding hate crimes and bullying on campus. The College has been viewed traditionally as a safe space to LGBTQ youth and I want to continue that legacy. Instructors like Ardel Thomas has taken many LGBTQ students under her wing and has provided mentorship and counsel to these students. I would advocate for more funding for programs that support LGBTQ youth. I understand how difficult it is for youth that do not have limited support systems because of their sexual orientation and their gender identity. I want City College to help people from all walks of life to feel they have a supportive and loving community on all of our campuses.

- 7) Supervised injection facilities or drug consumption facilities have been shown to reduce new HIV and hepatitis infections, overdose deaths, and public drug use, and to increase linkage to medical care and substance use treatment and save money, yet they remain controversial and illegal. If you are elected, what would you do to advocate for supervised injection sites?

I believe that this is a common sense issue, we need to provide clean needles to individuals who would benefit from the service. Doing this helps to alleviate health and safety issues for the entire community and I feel this is a practical and preventative measure that helps to enhance quality life for everyone especially those impacted by addiction.

PART 2: Yes/No Questionnaire

Please check **Yes** or **No** for each question.

| GENERAL | YES | NO |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 1. Are you registered to vote as a Democrat? | X | |
| 2. Have you ever run for elected office before? | X | |
| 3. Do you have a campaign consultant? If so, who: Shanell Williams | X | |
| 4. Have you ever sought the Milk Club endorsement in the past? | X | |

| LGBTQ ISSUES | | |
|--|---|--|
| 5. Do you support including full transgender health benefits in Covered California health plans? | X | |
| 6. Do you support public funding for employment development for transgender individuals? | X | |

| TENANT, HOUSING, AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES | | |
|---|---|--|
| 7. Do you support rent control? | X | |
| 8. Have you ever been involved as homeowner, buyer or agent in the eviction of a tenant? If so, please explain: | X | |

| RACIAL AND IMMIGRATION JUSTICE ISSUES | | |
|---|---|--|
| 9. Do you support driver's licenses for undocumented persons? | X | |
| 10. Do you support localities allowing noncitizens to vote in local elections, including but not limited to school board? | X | |
| 11. Do you support the protection of due process for immigrant youth accused of crime? | X | |
| 12. Do you support the DREAM Act? | X | |

| SOCIAL JUSTICE, HEALTH, NIGHTLIFE AND LABOR ISSUES | | |
|--|---|---|
| 13. Do you support capital punishment (death penalty)? | | X |
| 14. Do you support the decriminalization of sex work? | X | |
| 15. Did you support Prop 35 in November 2012? | | X |
| 16. Did you support Sen. Leno's 2013 bill (or at least the concept) to allow localities to allow some bars to serve liquor until 4 AM? | X | |
| 17. Do you support the legalization, taxation, and regulation of adult recreational use of marijuana? | X | |
| 18. Have you ever crossed a union picket line or violated a union boycott? If so, explain: | | X |
| 19. Do you support the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights? | X | |

| EDUCATION AND YOUTH ISSUES | YES | NO |
|---|------------|-----------|
| 20. Did you support Assemblymember Ammiano's AB 1266 (rights for transgender students)? | X | |
| 21. Do you support the Common Core education standards? | X | |

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| 22. Do you support lowering the threshold to pass a local parcel tax for education to 55%? | X | |
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ENVIRONMENTAL AND TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

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|---|---|--|
| 23. Do you support California's high speed rail plans? | X | |
| 24. Do you support Governor Brown's Delta Tunnels plan? | X | |

LOCAL BALLOT MEASURES

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|---|---|---|
| 25. Do you support Prop A (Transportation and Road Improvement Bond)? | X | |
| 26. Do you support Prop B (Population-Based Adjustment to General Fund Appropriation to Transportation Fund)? | X | |
| 27. Do you support Prop C (Children and Youth Fund)? | X | |
| 28. Do you support Prop D (Retiree Health Benefits for Former Redevelopment Agency and Successor Agency Employees)? | X | |
| 29. Do you support Prop E (Tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages)? | X | |
| 30. Do you support Prop F (Pier 70 Development Height Limit Increase)? | X | |
| 31. Do you support Prop G (Harvey Milk Anti-Speculation Tax)? | X | |
| 32. Do you support Prop H (Maintaining Athletic Fields in Golden Gate Park as Natural Grass)? | X | |
| 33. Do you support Prop I (Park Code – Children's Playgrounds, Walking Trails, Athletic Fields)? | | X |
| 34. Do you support Prop J (Administrative Code – Minimum Wage)? | X | |
| 35. Do you support Prop K (Affordable Housing Goals)? | X | |
| 36. Do you support Prop L (Transportation Priorities)? | X | |

STATE BALLOT MEASURES

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|--|---|---|
| 37. Do you support Prop 43 (Water Bond)? Note: this may not end up being on the ballot this year. | X | |
| 38. Do you support Prop 44 (Rainy Day Fund)? | X | |
| 39. Do you support Prop 45 (Health Insurers Justify Rate Increases)? | X | |
| 40. Do you support Prop 46 (Drug Testing Doctors; Raising Medical Malpractice Awards Cap)? | | X |
| 41. Do you support Prop 47 (Reducing Some Crimes From Felonies to Misdemeanors)? | X | |
| 42. Do you support Prop 48 (Indian Gaming Compacts Referendum)? | X | |
| 43. Do you support Prop 49 (Constitutional Amendment Opposing Citizens United)? | X | |