**The Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club**

**Questionnaire for the 2021 San Francisco Assessor-Recorder Endorsement**

*We invite you to participate in our club’s process for deciding our positions on the upcoming San Francisco Assessor-Recorder election.*

***There are two steps in our process:***

*2. Submit your completed questionnaire by December 13th*

*3. Speak at our combined PAC/General Membership Meeting on December 14th, when our endorsement vote will take place*

***Please return your completed questionnaire to pac@milkclub.org and to correspondent@milkclub.org no later than December 13th.***

*Your questionnaire responses will weigh heavily in our overall endorsement process.*

*Good luck!*

*— The Harvey Milk LGBTQ Democratic Club*

**Required Information**



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***Campaign Consultant or Main Point of Contact:*** Maggie Muir

***Political Party:*** Democratic

***Are you a Member of the Harvey Milk LGBTQ Club?:*** No

***If so, since when?:***

***Have you run for office before?:*** DCCC in 2012

***Have you ever sought our endorsement before?:*** DCCC in 2012

***Do you identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer (LGBTQ)?:*** I am the proud straight son of a gay father whom I married to his partner shortly after the Supreme Court ruled that same sex couples had to right to marry.

**PART 1:**

**Short Answer Questions**

**1. Describe your qualifications for the office you are seeking. Feel free to add anything that you would like our Members to know about you and your candidacy.**

I was inspired to a career in public service by role models who exemplified a belief that the best of government is realized when it listens closely to the people it serves and then designs policies and programs that better their lives.  My work has been guided by this belief since I started my service in 2009 as a neighborhood and district liaison in the Mayor’s Office of Neighborhood Services and as I worked my way up to larger and leading roles, meeting people where they were at, providing and facilitating access to all communities and constituents, understanding their needs through direct conversations and ensuring government was designing its programs, policies and services by centering community first.

I believe that every position I have held and each office I have worked with or partnered with has benefited from this approach.  And I believe that the experience I’ve accrued, together with this approach, has best positioned me to lead the Office of the Assessor-Recorder.  I believe that we need more people with experience grounded in and engaged with community to lead vital offices and teams in our City.  I’ve been a working artist, a service worker to pay the bills and a hard working public servant who wants to realize opportunities for fairness and equity for our communities.  This opportunity to lead the Assessor-Recorder’s Office and its committed team will allow me to contribute the skills developed over a decade of service to better serve San Franciscans, ensure that everyone is paying their fair share, enhance education and financial literary programs for residents, homeowners and seniors, advance racial equity programs within and without the office, and ensure the ongoing financial stability of the city with fairness and integrity.  It is and will be a continued honor to serve the people of the City and County of San Francisco.

**2. Do you have any key endorsements that you would like to share? Why are these endorsements meaningful to you?**

I’m proud of the diverse coalition of elected and community leaders and organizations, progressive and moderate, that are supporting me.  I believe their support reflects my ability to represent the diverse interests of our city, advocate and act on behalf of equitable outcomes for our residents, and competently and responsibly lead one of the most fundamentally important offices in our City.  I’m honored by the working relationships we’ve developed over the years, before and most especially throughout this pandemic, and our collective commitment to realizing the best of government for the benefit of San Francisco and its communities.

**3. What do you see as the most important short-term and long-term solutions to San Francisco’s homelessness crisis? What can you do in your office to help end homelessness?**

The role of the Assessor-Recorder is to ensure the ongoing financial stability and security of the City through the assessment of all property in San Francisco.  Doing that work successfully ensures that San Francisco has the resources it needs to address our most pressing issues.  Through our diligent work, $3.7B or 28% of San Francisco’s $13.1B current year budget is realized.  These resources provide a stable source of funding to support improvements and ongoing operations for critical services and our infrastructure: our roads, parks, schools, transportation and emergency services, and those programs whose value we’ve come to appreciate even more strongly throughout this pandemic.  I see my role as ensuring that those resources can be relied on so that San Francisco can invest where it matters most.

The homelessness response must be as complex, persistent and varied  as the issues that create it.  But very simply, we need homes.  And the services and resources that ensure people can stay in them and pursue them, with dignity and in health.  We’re seeing needed increases in funding, such as those  directed towards San Francisco’s $1B expansion of the Homeless Recovery Plan, that address homelessness in our communities, while at the same time direct those resources towards services that prevent it.  But we know we also need additional resources from all levels of government, so that programs such as hothose that help homeless seniors find housing and With resources, comes the need for accountability and the tracking that allows us to know how our City is making progress towards its goals.  We’ve seen our City innovate quickly to pursue the conversion of hotel sites into permanent affordable housing, with the services new residents will need to successfully make their transition.  We’ve seen our City increase engagement with thousands of individuals on our streets, speaking to their physical, mental, spiritual and economic needs, with thousands of them finding access to shelter solutions.

As this work continues, we need to keep our determination and will to end this crisis active and alive with the knowledge that we can and will make lasting positive change for those who continue to live on our streets.

**4. What work have you done to address economic inequality in San Francisco, particularly for workers and small business owners? What will you do to address them if elected?**

I’m proud of the work I’ve done in my eight years at the Office of Economic and Workforce development, centering workers and small business, communities and neighborhoods, and prioritizing those who’ve traditionally been left behind.  I’ve led increases in investments in our neighborhoods, such as the Mission, Excelsior, Lower Fillmore, Bayview, Chinatown and Mid Market/Tenderloin to bring economic opportunities to entrepreneurs and workers of color.  I’ve led public-public and public-private partnerships with non-profits, government and businesses to ensure that workers can be trained to leverage their passions to provide for themselves and their families with education and workforce opportunities that provide them a living wage, access to union jobs, and benefits.  We applied neighborhood and community based approaches to our workforce strategies, so our teams could meet community where they were, instead of believing that distant job centers were enough to get people into training and back into the workforce.  We hit the streets, met with community leaders and led resource fairs in communities so people could know and feel these opportunities were being designed for them.  We spoke truth to our seemingly strong unemployment numbers (pre-pandemic) illuminating that while our general numbers were strong, our communities of color were excluded from those benefits with unemployment rates 2x or 3x higher than their white counterparts.

As the pandemic surged in our communities, together with the Board of Supervisors, we invested in quarantine funding for essential workers to ensure they could be safe and take care of their families.  Together with our Mayor, I established the City’s first Black Business Fund for Black-Owned Businesses, increased resources for immigrant entrepreneurs, and ensuring our funds would be spent, with racial and economic equity in mind, in neighborhoods where those funds were most needed.

As Assessor, I will continue to be a voice, ally and advocate for racial, economic and social justice. It’s why I expanded our Family Wealth Series, bringing education online for easier accessibility to families and homeowners, in language and with community partners.  It’s why we’ve established and been pushing for increased partnerships that allow us to expand estate planning for homeowners of color, so that their most valuable asset can be best managed for the benefit of building intergenerational wealth in their communities.

And it’s why I’ve launched neighborhood sessions to meet residents and homeowners in their communities to ensure their individual needs are being addressed and to reinforce the accessibility we’re creating in the office so people feel the Assessor’s Office and our government is truly serving them.

And finally, it’s why I’m excited to leverage the requirements of a newly passed state law to remove racially restrictive language from covenants and deeds, as a means to advance our conversations around racial equity and the historic role that communities have played in reinforcing exclusionary tactics that have adversely impacted communities of color and our ability to create wealth for ourselves and our families.

**5. Describe your work addressing racial injustice, economic inequity, and police brutality in San Francisco.**

In addition to the work mentioned above, I’m proud of the innovative models I’ve supported and nurtured throughout my work in our neighborhoods.  Part of that work lives in the intersection of addressing racial injustice, economic inequity and police brutality that we’ve developed in the Tenderloin.  The innovative practices of providing safe havens for small business, children walking to school, families going to work and to the market has been facilitated not only by police, but by practitioners part of the organization Urban Alchemy.  They provide workforce opportunities for low-income and previously incarcerated workers who help us deal with our most pressing public safety issues  with sensitivity, care and radical presence.  By investing in our ethnic and other small businesses in the Tenderloin, we provide economic opportunity for them and their families, we increase the likelihood of their success through the investment in practitioners who discourage and prevent unsafe activities in their environment, without the threat of brutality in our communities, and offer a second chance for those looking to re-enter our society and give back to our communities while doing so.   I’ve been honored to develop, support and implement this kind of work for the benefit of the safety, health and success of the diverse communities of color who live in this community.

**6. How have you supported LGBTQ+ San Franciscans, and how will you continue to do so if elected?**

One example  of my support for the LGBTQ+ communities has focused on the support, development and establishment of cultural districts through the Office of Economic and Workforce Development.  I’m proud to have incubated and initiated, together with the Planning Department and Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development, the successful models for cultural districts that have supported the creation of the Compton’s Transgender Cultural District (in the Tenderloin), the Leather and LGBTQ+ Cultural District (in SOMA) and the Castro LGBTQ+ Cultural District.  I’m proud of the support and allyship I developed in our office to make funding investments a reality that support the stabilization of our LGBTQ+ communities in San Francisco as well as the tourism model that celebrates and centers community culture while welcoming economic activity into our districts.

I was honored to join this year’s Transgender Day of Remembrance at Counterpulse in allyship, ( a location whose acquisition and stabilization I also supported)  and have also supported the Transgender Cultural District’s connections to business and arts partners in its district to further opportunities for allyship and cultural and economic development.

Part of my work as Assessor will be to continue my allyship with the LGBTQ+ communities, providing access to the resources and educational tools I may bring through the office and to center them in community in partnership with you.

**7. Describe a time when you worked against an established power structure or entrenched authority to achieve progressive change. How was this positive change accomplished?**

At a time of extreme tension between the Mayor’s Office and the Latino communities in the Mission, including the Latino Parity and Equity Coalition, I was tasked with supporting the mediation between them.  It seemed as though the tensions between community and the City could not be overcome for the benefit of the Latino population and our desire to see the displacement of our community in the Mission come to an end, and the investments necessary for community stabilization to forcefully begin.  It required artful and persistent conversations from within the establishment and a trust that a process with and by community would become a pathway for investment and stabilization in the Mission.  Eventually, this relationship was formalized through a groundbreaking Mission Action Plan 2020, with the incredible curation and leadership of Claudia Flores, support from then Planning Director John Rahaim and a diverse group of committed Mission stakeholders who believed that our process could ultimately deliver desperately needed cultural and economic resources for the Mission and low-income and Latino families, seniors and community members.  Because of our collective will and determination, we built a collaborative relationship that realized tens of millions of dollars towards affordable housing that now stands today, a city government that allowed itself to make groundbreaking and equitable investments to stabilize and invest in the community and paved the way for relationships that would realize this community’s success as one of the strongest partners addressing equity and health disparities throughout the pandemic.

PART 2:

Yes or No Questions

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

GENERAL                                                                                                       YES    NO

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| Are you registered to vote as a Democrat? | YES |  |

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| Have you ever sought elected office before?                      DCCC in 2012 | YES |  |

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| Do you have a campaign consultant or other main point of contact? If so, who?    Please connect with Adam Mehis. | YES |  |

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| Have you ever sought a Milk Club endorsement in the past?  DCCC in 2012 | YES |  |