

MainPAC Candidate Survey

2021 Kansas Elections

Q1-5.

Candidate Name: Sollie Flora
Candidate Email: solliefloraks@gmail.com
Candidate Phone: 913-735-4882
Office Sought: Mayor
Office County: Johnson
Office City: Mission
Office District: At-Large

Candidate Rating: 94%

Q6. Political discourse in Kansas could be characterized as siloed and divisive. How do you intend to engage citizens and colleagues in potentially difficult conversations? (Available points: 1)

- A. If elected I will seek to find compromises when it is clear my constituents are divided. (1)
- B. If elected I will be loyal to the ideology associated with my party affiliation.

Candidate Answer: If elected I will seek to find compromises when it is clear my constituents are divided.

Candidate Comment: It is important that local elected officials don't side-step difficult conversations just for the sake of getting along or purported civility. Instead, we must be leaders who are willing to engage in good faith conversations on sensitive topics. I do think there are some issues we ultimately should not compromise on, like our shared humanity (i.e., LGBT+ rights, racial equity efforts), but it is still important to invite dialogue and bring our community forward together.

Q7. Which of the following statements best aligns with your stance on local elected officials making decisions for their communities, particularly local tax and revenue decisions? For information about Home Rule please see https://www.lkm.org/page/Home_Rule. (Available points: 2)

- A. Local elected officials should have ultimate authority in decision making for their communities, consistent with Home Rule. (2)
- B. Local elected officials should have limited authority in decision making for their communities. (1)
- C. Local elected officials should not have authority in decision making for their communities. Decisions should be made by the state.

Candidate Answer: Local elected officials should have ultimate authority in decision making for their communities, consistent with Home Rule.

Candidate Comment: Home Rule is enshrined in the Kansas Constitution, demonstrating its importance. Local governments must have the authority to exercise local control and determine local affairs. I oppose attempts by the Kansas Legislature to undermine local authority by preempting local government action.

Q8. Do you support allocating additional resources specifically for implementing/expanding mental health programs?

(Available points: 1)

- A. Yes (1)
- B. No

Candidate Answer: Yes

Candidate Comment: On Council, I have supported, for example, allocating funding to United Community Services of Johnson County for mental health (and other) programming and Mission's participation in the mental health co-responder program (relating to policing/public safety). This is an area where I would like to see continued and increased cooperation between the county and cities like Mission (as Mission on its own is likely too small to have its own dedicated staff or run mental-health specific programs).

Q9. Which of the following statements best aligns with your opinion about transparency in local government?

(Available points: 1)

- A. Local government should be as transparent as is legally possible in all circumstances. (1)
- B. Transparency is important, but should be secondary to efficiency.
- C. There are some times when transparency is important, but there are other issues the public doesn't have the capacity to understand and transparency becomes less important.
- D. The people vote for a candidate because they trust them, so transparency is not as important for elected officials as for other public leaders.

Candidate Answer: Local government should be as transparent as is legally possible in all circumstances.

Candidate Comment: I support policy making in a manner consistent with the Kansas Open Records Act and Kansas Open Meetings Act. When I joined the City Council, Mission was already live streaming and recording Council Committee meetings and City Council Meetings. I advocated that we also start recording Council Work Sessions (which have covered topics including the budget, racial equity, the CAKC Climate Action Plan, among other things), and our Work Sessions are now recorded. I have worked hard to promote transparency on the ward-level as well, instituting Ward 4 ward meetings and maintaining an active Facebook page to keep constituents up to date on the work of the city.

Q10. Which of the following statements best aligns with your opinion about access to health care? (Available points: 2)

- A. Local government has a responsibility to support access to health care. (2)
- B. Local government in my area is currently meeting the community's access needs. (1)
- C. Local government has no role in health care.

Candidate Answer: Local government has a responsibility to support access to health care.

Candidate Comment: I support city advocacy for increased access to health care. For example, Mission's 2021 Legislative Priorities, which we share with our State Representatives and State Senator, advocate for Medicaid expansion in Kansas.

Q11. To what degree do you believe that diversity in representation at all levels of government is critical to effective governing? (Available points: 1)

- A. Extremely Important (1)
- B. Neutral
- C. Not important

Candidate Answer: Extremely Important

Candidate Comment: I believe that diversity in representation, both a diversity of lived experiences and a diversity of viewpoints, helps to ensure that our decision-making is well informed and reflective of our community. I support efforts that demonstrate to historically-marginalized groups that Mission is a safe and welcoming place where all voices matter (like our Non-Discrimination Ordinance and our Racial Equity Resolution and work plan).

Q12. Professional public entity staff are expected to bring expertise, research, and accuracy to assist elected officials in their work. These may include health professionals, legal experts, research librarians, school administrators and the like. Regarding these professionals, which of the following is generally most true?

(Available points: 1)

- A. It is the role of locally elected leaders to **support** the professionals who work in public service (1)
- B. It is the role of locally elected leaders to **scrutinize** the professionals who work in public service
- C. It is the role of locally elected leaders to **stay distant** from the professionals who work in public spaces
- D. It is the role of elected leaders to **closely manage** the professionals who work in public service

Candidate Answer: It is the role of locally elected leaders to support the professionals who work in public service

Candidate Comment: As stewards of tax dollars who are accountable to our constituents, local elected leaders cannot defer to staff in all instances. However, for good governing, it is critical that we support our staff and trust in their expertise and judgment. Our staff is the backbone of our city services and we couldn't do it without them.

Q13. Which of the following most closely aligns with your view of the role of local government in each of these policy issues? (Available points: 6)

- A. Very Relevant (2)
- B. Somewhat Relevant (1)
- C. Irrelevant
- D. Not Applicable

Issue: Climate Change

Candidate Answer: Very Relevant

Candidate Comment: Prior to serving on City Council, I served on Mission's Sustainability Commission and am now a Council Liaison to that Commission. I am also a founding member of Climate Action KC and past chair of its Policy Committee and Advisory Committee. I believe that it is critical that Mission support the work of the CAKC Regional Climate Action Plan. On Council, I have supported many sustainability efforts, including participation in Evergy's Renewables Direct program, LEED-certified development efforts, and the Facility Conservation Improvement Program.

Issue: Gun Safety

Candidate Answer: Somewhat Relevant

Candidate Comment: Ideally, local government would play an active role in gun safety. Unfortunately in Kansas, the State Legislature has preempted local action and undermined local control in this area.

Issue: Voting Access

Candidate Answer: Very Relevant

Candidate Comment: This is especially important at the county level since Johnson County administers our elections. However, cities should also play a role by encouraging citizen participation and speaking out against voter suppression efforts at the state and national levels.

Q14. Which of the following statements best aligns with your opinion about K - 12 schools? (Available points: 1)

- A. Public money should only be used to support public schools. (1)
- B. Public money should be used to support all schools, regardless of their public or private status.

Candidate Answer: Public money should only be used to support public schools.

Candidate Comment: I support fully funding our Kansas public schools, as is constitutionally required. Public dollars should support public schools and private dollars can be used to support any private institutions. I oppose efforts to divert tax payer dollars to private institutions that often aren't accountable to the same rules and standards.

Q15. In light of the current political landscape, what is your stance on the role your personal religious beliefs should play in policy decisions? (Available points: 1)

- A. If I have personal religious beliefs that are important to me, I know they might differ from other's beliefs; therefore I will strive to respect the separation of church and state in policy decisions and my votes. (1)
- B. My personal religious beliefs are important to me therefore my religious beliefs will be the driving factor in policy decisions and my votes.

Candidate Answer: If I have personal religious beliefs that are important to me, I know they might differ from other's beliefs; therefore I will strive to respect the separation of church and state in policy decisions and my votes.

Candidate Comment: I fully support the separation of church and state. Mixing government and religion is a slippery slope that can result in members of the community who aren't aligned with the majority being excluded and marginalized.

Q16. How do you understand the role (the duties, responsibilities, and scope) of the position you are seeking?

Candidate Answer: I believe that the role of Mayor is to provide effective leadership for the city. Looking externally, the Mayor should be a strong advocate for Mission's priorities and interests at the regional, state, and national levels. Looking internally, the Mayor should communicate regularly with the City Council and staff leadership to ensure that priorities remain on track and in line with the needs and wants of the community. The Mayor should provide vision and "big picture" thinking - working to ensure the success of Mission not only today but setting the city up for success in the future.

Q17. You will have to publicly account for your political contributions. To date, how much money have you collected or has been pledged to your campaign?

Candidate Answer: \$10,967 (including in-kind donations)

Q18. How many donors does your answer above reflect?

Candidate Answer: 155 (including in-kind donors)

Q19. From which other organizations have you received endorsements? (Enter "n/a" if none).

Candidate Answer: N/A (too early in cycle)

Q20. From which other organizations are you seeking endorsements? (Enter "n/a" if none).

Candidate Answer: I am intending to seek endorsements from, at minimum, Equality Kansas and Run For Something.

Q21. Is there anything else you'd like to add to this survey? Please do that here.

Candidate Answer: I was very proud to receive Mainstream's endorsement in 2017 when I ran for City Council. Subsequently, I felt that the organization lost its way and acted out of line with its stated values by endorsing anti-LGBT state legislative candidates during the 2

END SURVEY