

MainPAC Candidate Survey

2021 Kansas Elections

Q1-5.

Candidate Name: Chris Newlin
Candidate Email: chris@chris-newlin.com
Candidate Phone: 913-735-7434
Office Sought: City Councilmember
Office County: Johnson
Office City: Overland Park
Office District: 6

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: Being a city official it is important to be non-partisan and trying to find a way forward by consensus. I am one who likes compromise because it helps everyone get something out of the deal. I also always look at the big picture and make sure we are progressing forward properly.

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: Local officials have the pulse of their community and know their needs to make their city thrive. It is best that local taxes and revenue are allowed to be spent back into their city to positively affect the residents.

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: I am the Chairman of the OP Mental Health Task Force and have led the effort to make mental health a top priority for Overland Park. The recommendations from the task force were unanimously approved by the City Council and will be included in the 2022 budget.

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: We should always be transparent with our residents and we should always be looking for new ways to expand. In my first term, I helped with the effort to make live streaming our meetings a standard. I also encourage staff to update information online to keep residents better informed.

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: In Johnson County, the cities are not directly responsible for healthcare. It is the responsibility of the city to plan for healthcare availability to be close to residents through zoning and planning.

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: A diverse group of representation brings about the best ideas and helps us move our society forward.

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: Overland Park Staff are trained experts in their profession. The role of the staff is to act on the policies the governing body has put in place. In return, the governing body needs to support those professionals and give proper direction in a positive manner when change needs to be made.

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: I am in favor of adopting the MARC Climate Action Plan into our comprehensive plan where it best fits our community.

Issue: Gun Safety

Candidate Answer: Somewhat Relevant

Candidate Comment: Gun regulation is not a role of a city official. Though I promote responsible gun ownership and will continue to advocate for it, as a member of the city council I need to adhere to state and federal laws.

Issue: Voting Access

Candidate Answer: Very Relevant

Candidate Comment: Everyone eligible to vote should be able to vote. A cornerstone of my campaign is that all residents are engaged and participating in local elections.

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 grew up going to a private Catholic school. My parents taught me that was a choice our family made for our education, but the taxes they paid for public school were enhanced our community and educate those who did not want to make the same choice. Property tax dollars allocated for public schools should be spent on public schools.

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:

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

Candidate Answer: Communicate policies and programs to residents. Respond to constituent needs, and represent the community to other levels of government. Understand budget needs and be fiscally responsible with tax dollars.

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: \$5100

Q18. How many donors does your answer above reflect?

Candidate Answer: 42

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

Candidate Answer: N/A

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

Candidate Answer: N/A

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

Candidate Answer: It has been an honor and a privilege to represent Ward 6 on the city council in my first term. I am looking forward to continuing the progress I have made in mental health awareness. And will continue to think of the future of OP to ensure it stays a fir

END SURVEY