



Connect with your Neighbors.....Change the World

# 2019 8<sup>th</sup> District Questionnaire - Challenger

Prepared by: **Patrick Jones**

Phone/Email: **(215) 526-1198 / patwjones@gmail.com**

Campaign Manager: **Campaign Management Team**

Phone/Email: **friendsofpatrickjones@gmail.com**

Committee Name: **Friends of Patrick Jones**

Campaign Address: **944 E. Rittenhouse Street, Philadelphia, PA 19138**

Fax:

Email: **info@votepatjones.com**

Website: **[www.votepatjones.com](http://www.votepatjones.com)**

## CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION

Candidate Name Patrick W. Jones

I have read the attached questionnaire responses and certify that the information provided is accurate and the opinions stated accurately reflect my own positions.

Candidate Signature: 

Date: January 11, 2019

**Please complete, sign and return this form via email in Word format to:  
[info@phillynn.org](mailto:info@phillynn.org) and mail a copy with the signature page to**

**Gloria Gilman  
121 S. Broad St., Suite 1720  
Philadelphia, PA 19107**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Although many of the questions in Section III below call for a simple yes or no answer, please feel free to provide an explanation for any of your choices. If you have not yet come to a final decision, or don't currently have enough information to provide an informed answer, please so state.

## II. BACKGROUND

### 1. What, if any, elected or appointed government office(s) have you held?

*I currently represent the fourth division in the Democratic Party's 59th Ward. I am also Second Ward Chair for the Democratic 59th Ward and Chair of the Democratic 59th Ward's Zoning Committee and Registered Community Organization. I was also elected in 2010 to represent the fifth division in the Democratic 59th Ward.*

*I was appointed to the Board of the Germantown Special Services District in 2016 and voted as Vice President in 2017.*

**2. With respect to your other qualifications for the office of 8<sup>th</sup> District Council member:**

*My professional experience as the Zoning Specialist in City Council for almost four years has afforded me the opportunity to work in every part of the 8th District. Sustainable and appropriate development that does not promote irresponsible gentrification is going to be an ongoing concern to the residents and comes up often within the zoning context. My skill-set gives me a leg up to effectively and responsively address these issues.*

*Also, my service to our community as a Director of Constituent Services in City Council, a committee person and block captain in Germantown, a member of the Board of Directors for East Mt. Airy Neighbors, and as President of the Nicetown CDC's Neighborhood Advisory Sub-committee has given me a clear understanding of the intricate issues that families have in every section of our Council District.*

**a. What community or policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.)**

- **Nuisance Business Law -**
  - Shoshana Bricklin ([sbricklin@comcast.net](mailto:sbricklin@comcast.net)), Former City Council Colleague
  - [https://business.phila.gov/media/NUISANCE-BUSINESS-LAW\\_ENG\\_final052617.pdf](https://business.phila.gov/media/NUISANCE-BUSINESS-LAW_ENG_final052617.pdf)
  - <http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/heardinthehall/New-penalties-on-the-way-for-nuisance-businesses.html>
- **Opposition to the SEPTA power plant in Nicetown**
  - Mitch Chanin, Philly 350 ([mitchchanin@gmail.com](mailto:mitchchanin@gmail.com))
  - Sophia Zaia ([fielanz@gmail.com](mailto:fielanz@gmail.com))
  - [Letter Drop to Mayor Kenney](#)  
(<https://www.facebook.com/sunrisephilly/videos/2169869073269087/>)
  - [Rally against climate change with Philly 350 - Day of Justice](#)  
(<https://www.facebook.com/350Philadelphia/videos/2140008629605065/>)
- **Neighborhood clean-ups**
  - Nicetown Park Clean-up
    - Benayahu Benyehuda, Board Member Nicetown CDC's Neighborhood Advisory Sub-committee ([bbenyehudah@yahoo.com](mailto:bbenyehudah@yahoo.com))
  - Sweep Sixteen Project
    - Leslie Winder, Former City Council Colleague ([lwinder1125@gmail.com](mailto:lwinder1125@gmail.com)),
- **Served on the Germantown Special Services District**
  - David Rose ([rosedchris@gmail.com](mailto:rosedchris@gmail.com)), Former Executive Director of Germantown Special Services District

**b. What about your background or experience do you think most qualifies you to be elected? Please attach a brief bio.**

*I am the oldest child of a North Philadelphia civil-rights advocate and a second-generation entrepreneur. I was raised in several neighborhoods of Northwest Philly and went to both public and private schools throughout the Northwest Region (Houston Elementary, Blair Christian Academy, and Phil-mont Christian Academy). When my mother and father separated, my father moved into the Allegheny West and Nicetown communities while my mother lived and invested in Mt. Airy and Germantown. Because my family extended geographically, I was able to grow up developing an extensive understanding of the life, culture, and values of our "Uptown" communities.*

*While attending Drexel University, I met and fell in love with my wife of 22 years, who also graduated from 8th Council District Schools: Pastorius Elementary, Hill-Freedman World Academy and Central*

*High School. We got married in 1999 and had six children. All of our children have graduated or will graduate from 8th Council District public schools. So the Jones Family has been and will be invested in the 8th Council District for generations. Our oldest child graduated from Imhotep Charter High School and is now proudly serving in the US Marine Corps (LCpl). Our oldest daughter graduated from Central High School and is a sophomore at Howard University. We also have three daughters at the Philadelphia High School for Girls and our youngest child attends public school in Mt. Airy.*

*I recently served my community as President of Nicetown CDC's Neighborhood Advisory Subcommittee. I also serve as a member of the Board of Directors with East Mt. Airy Neighbors, and as a Democratic committee person in Philadelphia's 59th Ward (Germantown). Although, I am professionally known for my zoning, business, and community development experience, I also worked as an IBEW electrician for years. But, serving my community was always my passion and I have helped thousands of families and many businesses in Northwest Philadelphia over the past decade.*

*I am currently looking to serve as the Eighth District Council Person so that I can work to provide permanent solutions to the many issues that have gone neglected for too long. Decreasing crime, increasing career opportunities, and expanding affordable housing options for seniors and working families are major issues that need attention right now. Because of my experience and network, I will be ready on Day One to begin solving our most important problems.*

**c. What other endorsements have you received?**

*Currently the League of Muslim Voters has voiced support for me. However, I will be seeking endorsements from many organizations, but for most it is too early in the process.*

**d. How do you plan to win?**

*My extensive network as a result of providing services throughout the district for the past 10 years has translated into a broad base of supporters and volunteers. I have worked with every Registered Community Organization in the district and have been a member of community and governmental organizations in Germantown, Mt. Airy, and Nicetown. I believe this race will be won with a grassroots strategy and to aid in that, I have connected with folks across our entire District who will attest to my ability to serve our communities and who will advocate for my candidacy. Families in our district want better living conditions and many people have witnessed and trust that I have the skill-set and willingness to deliver.*

**e. How much money have you raised? How much do you expect to raise?**

*My campaign consists of very experienced policy and politically strategic volunteers who have run successful campaigns in the 8th Council District over the past 20 years. It is early in our fundraising plan, but our budget consists of limited spending on personnel and concentrated spending on field operations during the petition term and on election day. With volunteers and focused spending on special operations, our budget has us spending where it matters - on promoting our message of a better district.*

**3. What three things would you most want to accomplish if elected?**

*As my website ([www.votePATjones.com](http://www.votePATjones.com)) indicates there are four fundamentals to my platform:*

- 1. Organizing and revitalizing struggling local business corridors and supporting established business districts to create living wage jobs for district residents, addressing poverty and crime issues, and invigorating a trash-free commercial environment.*
- 2. Actively opposing social injustices like, gun violence and poverty, in and outside of City Hall through collaborative and responsible legislation, as well as, by supporting social justice and youth organizations financially (PAF Grants) and vocally. I have been working hard to prepare our community for the end of a culture of gun violence by speaking out as often as I can. As Councilman, I will put resources to active programs that address our social justice issues. <https://www.facebook.com/VotePatJones/videos/603311080126993/>*
- 3. Advocating for a clean environment and opposing environmental racism and fossil-fuel spending.*
- 4. Adequate funding for our public schools including going after large non-profits to pay their fare share (PILOTS).*

### III. ISSUES

#### A. Economic Development

Would you back legislation to:

1. **Impose an impact fee on businesses failing to pay workers \$15/hr to reimburse the City for the costs of relieving poverty?**

*I support the recent bill passed by City Council to give its workers and those under city contracts \$15/hour. I think that businesses who get city contracts and don't abide by this requirement should have their contracts rescinded. Beyond that I would need further information on the legality and details for implementation of such a fee, but in general I support all initiatives to raise the minimum wage to make it a living wage. As a union member, I am a firm believer that "40 should be enough". Without a prevailing wage, it would have been impossible for my wife and me to raise our six children. No family should be expected to work for less than it costs to buy food, clothes, and to pay bills. We are a world-class city and it's time we act like it.*

2. **Take \$200 million of City pension funds now invested in the stock market to invest in neighborhood economic development projects?**

*Yes, but it must be financially sound with a quantifiable Return on Investment. I would also like the City, similar to NYC, begin the process of divesting its holdings from all fossil-fuel companies. This effort will involve Council legislation.*

3. **Create a program to provide technical assistance and start-up funding for cooperative, worker-owned businesses?**

*Yes. I would revive and update the old law on the books from the 1980s. Weavers Way Co-op is one of the largest businesses in the 8th Council District. My family has a membership (#40000016613) with Weavers Way Co-op because we firmly believe in the power co-op businesses have in keeping our community stable. Promoting co-ops would be a pure pleasure because it has been part of my family's culture.*

4. **Increase taxes to support City and/or School District services, and if so, which ones?**

*I would first like to go after large educational institutions and non-profits to pay their fair share through a Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS) initiative. I believe PILOTS should directly fund our schools because I see it as an investment educational institutions can benefit from by supporting better education for potential students. In addition to PILOTS, I believe we have other uncollected revenue out there that we need to be much more efficient at collecting. We have thousands and thousands of abandoned lots owned by the city that need to be responsibly developed. We have social justice issues that are factors to limiting our city's tax revenue. For example, gun violence costs our city millions of dollars in medical expenses, lost earnings and productivity, property damage, and criminal justice costs. If we adjust our budget to support economic stability in low-income communities, we can save millions on the backend. I also would like to incentivize many Philadelphia workers who live outside of the city to reside here by increasing the non-resident wage tax. Currently, the non-resident wage tax (3.46%) is lower than the resident wage tax (3.88%). We must look for lost revenue instead of taking the easy way out and increasing taxes on Philadelphia's families.*

5. **Reduce taxes as an economic development strategy, and, if so, which ones?**

*I would like to introduce a resident tax rebate for workers earning less than \$15/hour similar to former, late-Councilman David Cohen's tax cut paralleling the state's tax relief for low-income workers. (City Council passed this bill but subsequently rescinded it.) Raising the minimum wage to \$15/hour for all is important but this cut would ease the pain for families working at below \$15/hour until the city and the business community work together to see prevailing wages for every family. This cut would also help stimulate our local economy as I would be revitalizing our commercial districts in low-income*

communities. We need to create ways to keep dollars at home as currently they are spent outside of our community.

**6. Create a commission to study the creation of a Bank of Philadelphia to hold all City deposits and invest them locally?**

*Yes. Since creating a commission will require a charter change that must be voted on by the electorate; this would be major opportunity to educate and mobilize our citizens about the benefits such an initiative could provide to our city.*

**7. Create a system of participatory budgeting that would allow 8<sup>th</sup> District residents to control allocation of all or a portion of funds coming to the District?**

*Under my Council leadership I will hold community meetings prior to and during the budget season for input and feedback. Beyond that I am not sure legally how a participatory budgeting system would work but am open to hearing more about this from those who have a specific legislative proposal.*

## **B. Education**

Would you back legislation to:

**1. Enact a plan that would help regulate charter schools by making their budgetary practices transparent, ridding them of conflicts of interest, and stopping them from cherry-picking their student bodies? If so, what would that plan look like?**

*I am not sure whether City Council can directly regulate charter schools. However, I would support public hearings to examine the issue and advocate to ensure transparency and fairness.*

**2. Provide universal pre-k to all 3 and 4 year olds in the City?**

*Yes.*

**3. Make the School Board an elective office, or otherwise deepen community participation in School Board appointments?**

*Yes, but these elections must be regulated under a campaign finance scheme. Public financing would be best, but at a minimum there should be contribution and spending limitations.*

**4. Compute the cost/benefit ratio for the School District of all proposed KOZ zones before they're approved by Council?**

*Absolutely because the benefits provided to property owners who receive KOZ designation are far greater than the current 10-year property tax abatements.*

**5. Increase funding for the School District? If so, please explain.**

*Yes. Our schools are in terrible physical shape and need much more attention. While lobbying and working with the State is always important, at the local level I would support going after large educational institutions and non-profits through the use of PILOTs (Payments In Lieu of Taxes).*

## **C. Criminal Justice**

Would you back legislation to:

**1. Create an independent civilian police review board with subpoena power and the ability to suspend or fire police officers found to engage in misconduct?**

*It is important that all residents have confidence in our police. The current complaint system has been deemed as too biased to produce appropriate accountability. That being said, the devil is in the details. An independent board (which would have to be the subject of a charter change) must both prevent*

*overzealousness by civilians while also providing real justice to those aggrieved. NYC has an independent board and Allegheny County is considering legislation to establish one. So in addition to talking with folks locally, I would consult with people in other jurisdictions to get the benefit of their experience.*

**2. End the stop and frisk program?**

*Absolutely. As a Black male and a father of a son, I have had personal experience with this program and will fight hard to see the program abolished.*

**3. Demolish the House of Corrections?**

*The City has slated to close the House of Corrections by 2020. I do not know whether any decision has been made as to the disposition of the closed facility. I understand that demolition could cost at least \$7 million. So factoring into such decision is the cost of demolition versus the cost of repurposing. I would like to see the building repurposed to save the city the cost of demolition.*

**4. Increase post-release counseling for jobs, housing and other support services?**

*Yes. Just from an economic standpoint without even considering societal benefits, it is a better investment for the city to keep people out of jail.*

**5. Bar employers from denying jobs to ex-offenders without a specific job-related basis?**

*Yes. This is an important expansion of our ban-the-box ordinance and is the right and fair thing to do.*

**D. Reducing Corporate Power Over Our Politics and Economy**

Would you back legislation to:

**1. Bar or limit privatization of City property and work done by City employees? More specifically are there any circumstances under which you would sell PGW?**

*I oppose the City selling PGW. I will also scrutinize our budget carefully to make sure that we are not privatizing work as a means to circumvent the municipal union contracts.*

**2. Move Pension Fund investment decisions in-house?**

*I would need more information to fully address this question. That being said, City Council should set out the broad policy parameters of how the pension funds should be invested. If the private managers that are employed by the City are not able to appropriately implement such policies, then they should be terminated. I believe that one of the issues with the City's choice of investment management firms is that they lack diversity. If the question involves other concerns, I would be interested to know what they are.*

**3. Reform PIDC, the City's main economic development funding agency, so that its Board has a majority of public and community members, rather than Chamber of Commerce appointed members?**

*Yes. The allocation of public funds should always have checks and balances on the community level. It is a conflict of interest for any one agency or group to have a majority of representation on a controlling body which oversees spending public dollars.*

**4. Require the City to withdraw subsidies from corporations that fail to provide jobs or other benefits to City residents?**

*Definitely. Businesses that use public funds and do not hire Philadelphians must be incentivized to reconsider their business plans.*

**5. Publicly finance City elections?**

*Yes, and particularly if we have an elected School Board.*

**E. Housing**

Would you back legislation to:

**1. Enact a rent stabilization program?**

*Yes. I believe that our city needs rent stabilization to protect against irresponsible gentrification. In our district, neighborhoods like Tioga, Germantown, and Nicetown are vulnerable to erratic change and some families renting in Mt. Airy are already experiencing the effects through spiking rents.*

**2. End, limit or curtail Councilmanic prerogative over land disposition?**

*Councilmanic prerogative is a practice, not a rule. But I will make sure that land disposition decisions have input from those in the neighborhoods closest to the proposed project. I would not let Council members who are not familiar with my district to undermine that.*

**3. Enact inclusionary zoning requirements to compel inclusion of affordable units in all market rate developments?**

*Yes, but with developments over a certain size. I think it is important that we create more affordable housing options, especially in middle neighborhoods like Mt. Airy and vulnerable communities like Nicetown, Tioga, and Logan. I would work with the Department of Housing and Community Development, as well as, our state elected officials to increase major affordable housing developments like Nicetown Court I and Nicetown Court II across our district.*

**4. Support a dedicated fund to provide technical assistance and start up funding for land trusts and housing co-ops?**

*Yes. I would also look to leverage such a fund with support from our state and even the federal government.*

**5. Require the land bank to prioritize the disposition of properties for low-income and cooperatively owned developments?**

*Yes, but I would like to see the development of low-income cooperatively-owned developments. This form of ownership creates more stability in neighborhoods. Currently in the 8th District I believe there is only one limited equity housing coop, Vernon House. This model needs to be expanded.*

## **F. Environmental Justice**

**1. Would you use the City's power of the purse to block SEPTA'S completion of a natural-gas fueled power plant in Nicetown?**

*Absolutely. The current Council person, while voicing concern about this project has not used this approach to convince SEPTA to change its course.*

**2. What is your position on the proposal to build a new Liquefied Natural Gas Plant in Southwest Philadelphia?**

*If this is harmful to the community's health, like the Nicetown power plant, I would oppose it. I think one way to approach this (as well as the Nicetown plant) issue is through legislation to update the City's Air Management Code, something that has not happened in decades.*

**3. What will you do, or have you done, to support and promote the use of solar and other renewable energy sources in the District?**

*I would like to see more businesses, like the Trolley Car Diner, use solar energy to cut their energy costs. The production and installation of solar and renewable energy systems are important job-creation engines that I would like to see our schools providing training for. As a member of Local Union*

*98, I trained extensively not only on the installation of photovoltaics, but I also extensively studied its benefits to residential and commercial property owners. Because of that training years ago, I became a strong advocate for the financial and environmental advantages of renewable resources.*

**4. Do you support a plan for City government or the entire City to be fossil-free by a particular date? If so, how would you accomplish those goals?**

*I have already spoke out in demonstrations opposing the SEPTA power plant in Nicetown and called for SEPTA to be fossil-free. I think we should work with scientists and local advocates to determine the quickest date possible. I would support our City working toward this goal with all deliberate speed. The climate crisis is already here and we can not delay any more.*

**G. General Statement**

Use this space to provide any further information that you would like us to consider about your candidacy, not covered by the questions above.

*My process as the 8th District City Council person will be simple and clear. I will be a vocal and effective leader, informed by my past experiences and proven commitment to public service. I believe that crafting effective public policy starts from listening to the stories from within the community so that creative, responsive legislation and initiatives will **address the root causes problems.***