



VOTER GUIDE

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
2014 DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Jews United for Justice Campaign Fund mobilizes the Jewish communities of Greater Washington to advance campaigns for social justice and support progressive candidates for office.

As a Jewish voice in the progressive community and a progressive voice in the Jewish community, we set out to create a voter guide that would provide the Jewish community and JUFJ members in Montgomery County, Maryland, insight into the 2014 County Democratic primary election.

This guide is the result of candidate questionnaires and interviews conducted by JUFJ volunteers, who focused on the social justice issues that we ourselves would consider when making a choice in this election and the issues that JUFJ has taken on on campaign issues.

See the full JUFJ questionnaire and each candidate's responses: jufjcampaignfund.org/mdprimary

YOUR VOTE MATTERS!

Early voting begins June 12 and ends June 19.
Primary day is Tuesday, June 24.

*JUFJ Campaign Fund
1633 Connecticut Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20009*

KEY ISSUES

MINIMUM WAGE

JUFJ and our members are proud to have been a key part of the coalition that advocated for Montgomery County to raise its minimum wage in a regional compromise to \$11.50/hr by 2016, to index the wage to inflation, and to raise the wage for tipped workers to 70% of the minimum wage. This original proposal, however, was weakened before its passage. We asked candidates if they supported strengthening or further weakening the County's minimum wage increase.

EDUCATION AND THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

A recent study from the Office of Legislative Oversight notes a growing achievement gap between white students and students of color in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Half of the County's budget - which the Council oversees, is allocated for MCPS - but the Council has no authority over the way the budget is implemented. Given the Council's limited procedural ability to intervene to address the growing achievement gap, we asked the candidates what role they think the Council should play in bringing attention, oversight, and resources to the school system.

TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

As the County grows, we all experience increased congestion on the roads. Alternatives to cars can increase quality of life for all and reduce harmful greenhouse gases. A good public transit system also allows people from all class backgrounds to easily get to work. We asked the candidates their positions on the proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) is a part of the plan for Up-county that is mentioned several times.

KEY ISSUES *continued*

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Finding an affordable place to live is a challenge for many families in the county. The lack of affordable units is created by a number of factors, especially rising housing costs, and new development replacing older affordable housing. Montgomery County's trailblazing MPDU (Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit) inclusionary zoning policy requires that all new construction include 12.5 percent of their units as affordable within certain zones of the county, but there is a debate as to whether this policy will be adequate to replace the existing units of affordable housing that are lost. The county has oversight over final zoning decisions in master and sector plans. This includes the decision to "upzone" certain areas, allowing more density and effectively the destruction of existing properties, and the redevelopment of upzoned areas. There is a real tension between preserving existing housing, much of which is currently affordable, and the creation of new housing that will include 12.5 percent affordable units. We asked the candidates to weigh in on how they think the County Council should approach this tension. The Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) is mentioned several times; this County fund has a variety of uses to incentivize the creation or preservation of affordable housing.

We also asked candidates to give their opinions on a variety of protections for renters. Despite the increase in recent years to 30 percent of county residents being renters, the legal protections for renters lag behind neighboring jurisdictions like Washington D.C. We asked candidates to give their opinions on a variety of protections for renters, including: just cause eviction (which would limit the number of reasons a tenant's lease cannot be renewed) and rent stabilization (which would establish guidelines for an allowable increase in rent each year).

WORKPLACE JUSTICE

Citizens returning from incarceration face significant challenges to successfully reentering our community. Several municipalities, including Baltimore City, San Francisco, and Washington D.C., have recently passed or are considering "Ban the Box" legislation, which would prohibit employers from inquiring about job applicants' arrest or conviction records until after a conditional offer of employment has been extended. We asked candidates for their position on Ban the Box legislation.

MAGIC WAND

We believe that a vibrant political imagination is a key aspect of leadership. To highlight this we asked each candidate what she or he would do with a magic wand that could enact any policy or program in the County - and fully fund it! (Please note we didn't get to this question in the interview with all candidates.)

AT-LARGE

four seats, contested by four incumbents and two challengers



BETH DALY (CHALLENGER)
bethdaly.org

With her professional experience in political communications, impressive knowledge of County government, and fundraising success, Beth Daly is a considerable challenger. Her focus on land use speaks to her experience as a civic and environmental activist, notably serving on the Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board and playing a key role in organizing the coalition to Save Ten Mile Creek. Daly says she would use master plans and zoning as a major tool to preserve and create more affordable housing and would allocate more money for the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF).

She believes the county should explore rent stabilization as a more comprehensive tool for preserving affordable housing, as long as landlords are incentivized to keep up

their properties. She also supports just cause eviction legislation.

Daly supports Montgomery County's minimum wage law and strengthening the law to include indexing and an increase for tipped workers. She would support Ban the Box legislation.

In addition to supporting universal pre-K for MCPS, Daly would propose an inspector general to complete an external audit using measurement metrics for all of MCPS's programs.

Expanding public transit would be one of Daly's top priorities. She notes that there is no public transit Upcounty and would prioritize the CCT, BRT, and a third track on the Brunswick MARC lane.



MARC ELRICH (INCUMBENT)
marcelrich.com

Before being elected to the Council in 2006, Councilmember Marc Elrich was a teacher and City Councilmember in Takoma Park. Elrich is a progressive champion who challenges his colleagues by introducing bold ideas.

Elrich was the lead architect of the county's minimum wage increase and of the regional effort between Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, and D.C. to raise the minimum wage that significantly contributed to successful passage of the legislation. He would like to strengthen the law by amending it to include indexing and an increase for tipped workers.

He has been instrumental in the effort to preserve affordable housing in several master plans by not "up-zoning" existing residential housing. Elrich has been a long-time champion

of rent stabilization and continues to work with many stakeholders to craft a policy that will preserve existing housing stock as affordable and allow development to bring needed economic activity to neglected areas of the County. He also supports just cause eviction legislation.

Elrich believes the Council can play a major role in strengthening the social fabric of the county which will in turn help students succeed in school. He believes the Council should restore funding to after school programs.

Elrich was the original author of the BRT plan and pledges to pursue its funding and implementation. He is working with Councilmember Branson to research and draft a Ban the Box policy for the County.

AT-LARGE *continued*



NANCY FLOREEN (INCUMBENT)
nancyfloreen.org

Councilmember Nancy Floreen, a former Planning Board member and mayor of Garrett Park, was elected to the County Council in 2002. Floreen has a reputation as the one of the more politically moderate and business-friendly members of the Council. Floreen believes job creation is key to keeping the County diverse and thriving. She has helped to create the Montgomery Business Development Corp, which was designed to take politics out of economic development. She is now working to improve the Workforce Investment Board to strengthen the job training offerings of over 70 different programs and nonprofits.

Floreen supports the continued creation of MPDUs to address the affordable housing crunch. She would like to see more affordable units built in areas like Bethesda, and doesn't support rent stabilization as she thinks it would hurt development and the economy.

Floreen was one of the five county councilmembers who voted to water

down the county minimum wage bill to delay implementation and remove inflation indexing. She then voted for the County's minimum wage increase, but today wouldn't support going back and amending the minimum wage law to include indexing. She believes we need to give businesses time to adjust, and is confident that the Council will continue to raise the wage over time.

She asserts that the best way to get people out of poverty and to address the achievement gap in schools is to get people into good jobs. Floreen also notes that more could be done to expand early childhood education if there was more space to use for programs in the public schools.

Floreen supports BRT where it is desired by residents and can be funded, which is code for opposing it. She is dubious the plan will ever be implemented. She noted a number of other transit plans that have failed to come to fruition and the current low percentage of transit riders in the County as reasons to be cautious.

Floreen would support Ban the Box legislation if it were proposed at the County level.

Floreen believes "the government doesn't really do much," but it does create an environment where other people are able to do things. Nonetheless, with a magic wand she would create all the extra space needed in the public schools to allow for universal early childhood education across the County.



GEORGE LEVENTHAL (INCUMBENT)
georgeleventhal.com

Elected to the Council in 2002, Councilmember George Leventhal is currently the Council Vice President. In more than ten years on the Council Leventhal has established a strong record on a number of progressive issues, particularly strengthening social services, including the Montgomery Cares program that provides health care to low-income residents.

Leventhal was one of the five county councilmembers who voted to water down the county minimum wage bill to delay implementation and remove inflation indexing. Leventhal worked to move the bill out of committee and build a compromise around the final wage that secured a strong majority of the Council voting in favor of the increase. While we don't agree with weakening the increase, we do appreciate his work to bring his colleagues together around the issue. He now supports indexing the wage and increasing the tipped wage.

Leventhal believes the best way to increase affordable housing is to increase the supply of housing generally. In our interview, Leventhal did not seem to worry that people will be displaced by new development, especially around the proposed Purple Line. He does not support rent stabilization, instead favoring rent subsidies or tax credits for landlords who rent below market rate.

Leventhal believes the Council can play a leading role in drawing attention and resources to the achievement gap by commissioning research to identify areas for improvement. He also believes the budget process should be an opportunity for Councilmembers to increase oversight of MCPS funding.

Leventhal supports the BRT plan and pledges to work to secure funding for its implementation. Like several other candidates, he would like to learn more about Ban the Box legislation before taking a position.

AT-LARGE *continued*



VIVIAN MALLOY (CHALLENGER)
vivianmalloy.com

Vivian Malloy has been a community activist and active member of the local Democratic Party for the past twenty years. She currently is serving her second term as an elected official with the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee (MCDCC). Before her retirement she was commissioned as a military officer in the Army Nurse Corps.

Malloy believes in bringing more funding and transparency to MCPS, and is a strong supporter of the upcounty CCT and expanding RideOn service.

Ms. Malloy did not return the JUFJ questionnaire or request for an interview.



HANS RIEMER (INCUMBENT)
hansriemer.com

Elected to the County Council in 2010, Councilmember Hans Riemer has a long history in progressive issue and election organizing. While on the council, he significantly restored the full funding for the County's EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit).

Riemer was one of the five county councilmembers who voted to water down the county minimum wage bill to delay implementation and remove inflation indexing. He had drafted his own wage legislation before Councilmember Elrich proposed the bill that was ultimately passed. This legislation and several amendments he proposed to the minimum wage law, however, were weaker than the bill Elrich introduced. He now regrets his support for the weaker legislation and supports strengthening the law to return indexing and an increase in the tipped wage. He would support a county-level Ban the Box policy.

On affordable housing, he falls on the side of creating more units and

expanding the MPDU rather than restricting new development. In terms of protections for renters, he thinks that tenants rights are relatively strong in Montgomery County, and supports strengthening those protections through just cause eviction legislation. He approves of rent stabilization in Takoma Park, but doesn't think that policy would work well for the entire county.

Riemer firmly believes that fighting poverty is a key strategy for addressing the achievement gap. He acknowledges that securing more funding for the school system will be a perennial problem for introducing new programs. He also proposes building childcare spaces in new schools to expand access in the County.

Riemer fully supports the BRT plan and pledges to move forward on implementing the CCT plan. He has already made modest improvements to RideOn's service by working with his colleagues to fund five new buses.

DISTRICT 1

one seat, contested by one incumbent and one challenger



ROGER BERLINER (INCUMBENT)
rogerberliner.com

Councilmember Roger Berliner was first elected to the County Council in 2006. As an environmental lawyer and a former Congressional staffer, Berliner brings a regulatory eye to the Council. His experience with energy regulation is unique on the Council and has enabled the County to have greater oversight of public energy utilities.

Berliner supported the local minimum wage increase, but introduced several weakening amendments that moved back the phase-in to 2017 and removed indexing and the tipped wage increase. Berliner explains this move as motivated by the fear that the County would step out too far beyond state's minimum wage increase. We do not think this was the right move for the Council. In terms of strengthening the new law, Berliner does not currently think the tipped minimum wage needs to be raised.

Berliner believes that to address the lack of affordable housing, more affordable units simply need to be created. He is not in favor of rent control, but is interested in looking more deeply into other protections for renters, including just cause eviction legislation. Berliner has suggested that the Office of Consumer Protection, as a well-funded agency without a potential conflict of interest, should oversee landlord-tenant relationships instead of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

Berliner contends that addressing the achievement gap is truly the responsibility of the school system. He indicated that even proposals such as allocating funding for school board staff couldn't come from the Council because they do not have the ability to insert new line items into MCPS's budget and any more oversight from the Council should come from the Education Committee,

As Chair of the Council's Transportation Committee, Berliner helped lead the Council to the 9-0 vote to approve the BRT plan. He pledges to aggressively move forward to secure funding and implement the plan. Like several other candidates, Berliner was sympathetic to the idea of Ban the Box legislation, but would need to consider it more fully.

With a magic wand Berliner would create the finest rapid transit system in the county by advancing BRT.



DUCHY TRACHTENBERG (CHALLENGER)
duchytrachtenberg.com

Duchy Trachtenberg served on the Council as an At-Large member from 2006 to 2010; she lost her seat after making a number of tough decisions that significantly impacted public sector unions. She is challenging the incumbent now because she says District 1 residents are tired of "business as usual." As a former clinical social worker and public health professional, one of Trachtenberg's proudest accomplishments from her time on the Council is the creation of a Family Justice Center designed to provide wraparound services for survivors and families experiencing domestic violence.

Trachtenberg proposes addressing affordable housing by working with developers to create more affordable units and pursuing public-private partnerships to create housing for seniors and other vulnerable popula-

tions. She would bring back an earmark of tax revenue she championed while on the Council that was used for rental assistance. Trachtenberg doesn't support rent stabilization, but would support the County allocating more money for rental subsidies. She supports just cause eviction legislation.

Trachtenberg is a strong supporter of strengthening the minimum wage increase to include indexing and an increase for tipped workers.

Trachtenberg states that the Council does have a role to play in addressing the achievement gap in MCPS. She proposes creating Youth Resource Centers associated with the schools that will leverage existing public services in a wraparound model - similar to the Family Justice Center - and provide students and families with access to counseling that will help them perform better in school.

She is a supporter of BRT, but acknowledges that funding the plan is a challenge. Trachtenberg suggests exploring public-private partnerships in the early stages of implementation. Ban the Box legislation is a "no brainer" for Trachtenberg.

With a magic wand Trachtenberg would create Youth Resource Centers because she believes in the power of community and has seen it work with the Family Justice Center.

DISTRICT 2

one seat, contested by one incumbent and one challenger



CRAIG RICE (INCUMBENT)
craigrice.com

Councilmember Craig Rice was elected to the County Council in 2010. In 2014 he was elected by his peers to serve a one-year term as the Council President. Before serving on the County Council, Rice was the District 15 Delegate to the State Assembly from 2006 to 2010.

Rice's support for the County's minimum wage increase from the dais

was one of the key votes in passing an increase at the County level.

As chair of the Education Committee Rice has introduced and passed a number of small reforms designed to improve curricula and make textbooks more affordable.

Councilmember Rice didn't return our questionnaire or request for an interview.



NEDA BOLOURIAN (CHALLENGER)
nedabolourian.com

Neda Bolourian is a community activist who grew up in Montgomery County.

Publically Bolourian supports indexing the County's minimum wage to keep pace with inflation. She also supports lowering local property

and payroll taxes across the board because she believes they place an undue burden on County residents.

Bolourian didn't return the JUFJ questionnaire or request for an interview. We do not see her as a serious contender.

DISTRICT 3

open seat, contested by four candidates



GULED KASSIM
kassim2014.org

Guled Kassim emigrated from Somalia to Silver Spring as a political refugee. Professionally, Kassim is a grant-writer and business consultant.

Publically he has stated support for early childhood education and public transit (specifically the CCT and

BRT.) If elected, he pledges to focus on expanding business opportunities for the women- and minority-owned businesses.

Kassim didn't return the JUFJ questionnaire or request for an interview. We do not see him as a serious contender.



SIDNEY KATZ
sidneykatz.com

Sidney Katz has served as the mayor of Gaithersburg since 1998 and on the City Council for 20 years before that. Katz believes that “most people want to be reasonable and together you can come up with a solution that works for everyone,” suggesting that if elected to the Council he would not ruffle feathers. He is proud, however, of his and the City Council’s work to create the Wells/Robertson addiction treatment facility that had many vocal opponents.

He supports the County’s minimum wage increase and thinks that further action to strengthen the law should be considered. He concludes that indexing is a “no brainer,” but isn’t convinced that tipped workers need a raise. Katz would support very lim-

ited Ban the Box legislation that gives second or third chances to people who are qualified for the jobs to which they apply.

Katz believes that anyone who works in the County should be able to afford to live here, and his solution is to continue to use the MPDU program and other incentives for affordable units. Katz does not support rent stabilization or just cause eviction legislation policies.

With a magic wand Katz would try to solve the County’s transportation problem. He thinks that with all of the extra time we all save using quick public transit we could tackle the County’s other issues.

DISTRICT 3 *continued*



TOM MOORE
moore4council.org

Tom Moore won a spot on the Rockville City Council in 2013. In the short time since then, he has won a significant victory to preserve affordable housing in the City by persuading the Council to approve the public purchase of an affordable building. He combines this experience with extensive professional work supporting progressive candidates for elected office across the country.

Moore supports both preserving existing units of affordable housing through zoning and the use of public funds to purchase buildings or subsidize affordable rents. In addition he supports using more HIF funding to incentivize the creation of MPDUs.

He strongly supports indexing the County minimum wage and increas-

ing the tipped wage. Moore supports Ban the Box legislation.

To address the achievement gap, Moore would fund a public staff position to execute oversight of the school system's budget similar to the 40 employees who currently perform that function for the rest of the County budget.

Moore fully supports the BRT plan and would work to implement it if elected to the Council.

With a magic wand Moore would address income inequality. Using the projected royalties from public solar energy (another program he would create), he would have the County cut a check for a basic income for all residents.



RYAN SPIEGEL
ryanspiegel.com

Ryan Spiegel has served as a Gaithersburg City Councilmember since 2007. He combines a lawyer's perspective with progressive values. One of his signature accomplishments on the Council was the creation of Bank on Gaithersburg, a program that brings together banks and nonprofits to provide financial education and quality bank accounts.

Spiegel holds up Old Gaithersburg as a good compromise between preserving old affordable units and new construction incentivized by the City. In addition, he believes renter protections in the County should be strengthened. He remains open to rent stabilization, but has not decided on the specifics of a policy he will support. He supports just cause eviction legislation and other measures

to protect tenants, including offering two-year leases and a stronger Office of the Tenant Advocate.

He strongly supports indexing the new minimum wage rate and raising the wage rate for tipped workers. Spiegel would like to see more specifics on Ban the Box legislation, but supports offering second chances to people returning from prison.

Spiegel believes the Council should play a more active role in oversight of MCPS. To create this healthy tension he could meet with the school board members throughout the year.

With a magic wand Spiegel would create a world-class free transit system with high speed trains that would fly around the County.

DISTRICT 4

one incumbent, running unopposed



NANCY NAVARRO
nancynavarro.org

Before joining the Council, Nancy Navarro served on the Montgomery County Board of Education and founded and ran a community nonprofit. On the Council she has brought her experience and progressive values together. As a Latina representing a district with a large number of Spanish speakers, she has also undertaken a number of initiatives to make the County government more accessible for all.

Navarro was one of the three sponsors of the County's minimum wage bill and used her position as the Council President at the time to secure its passage. She supports an indexed minimum wage and increasing the base pay of tipped workers.

Navarro strongly support the County's MPDU program. She also supported maintaining the current zoning for market affordable apartments in the Long Branch Sector Plan. She

supports preserving the County's current affordable housing stock, and therefore did not support upzoning garden apartments in various sector plans, including Glenmont. She would consider supporting a rent stabilization program where property owners have an incentive to improve their properties for their renters.

Navarro believes the Council should play a bigger role in framing the conversation around the achievement gap, and to that end she has begun to organize a summit called "Ready for Tomorrow" that will focus on the achievement gap and workforce development issues. The summit will bring together a variety of stakeholders to develop a blueprint for Montgomery County to tackle the achievement gap.

Navarro voted in favor of the BRT plan and would support the County acting to pass Ban the Box legislation.

DISTRICT 5

open seat, contested by five candidates



CHRISTOPHER BARCLAY
christopherbarclay.org

Christopher Barclay has been a member of the Montgomery County Board of Education since 2006. In that capacity, he was elected by his colleagues to serve as President of the Board at a time when the County was facing extreme financial burdens during the recession and at the same time the Board was searching for a new superintendent.

Publicly, Barclay supports establishing a larger workforce development

center in East County to spur economic development. Barclay supports the BRT plan and would pursue public-private partnerships to secure funding.

Recent revelations of Barclay's misuse of a Board of Education credit card have led many to question his credentials for this position.

Barclay didn't return JUFJ's questionnaire, and we were not able to schedule an interview before this guide was finalized.

DISTRICT 5 *continued*



EVAN GLASS
evanglass.com

As a former political reporter with a record of public service on local nonprofit boards and civic associations, Evan Glass promises to shake up the County Council by asking tough questions. If elected, his major priority would be bringing jobs to East County, which he sees as the ultimate form of economic justice. Glass asserts that in order to advance the progressive agenda, the County needs a strong tax base.

Glass acknowledges that the County's MPDU program isn't working to address all of the County's affordable housing needs. He suggests allocating more funding for the HIF to incentivize the creation of more affordable units and the preservation of existing affordable units. To address the needs of renters, Glass believes long-term residents should be supported to stay in their communities through

the use of tax credits. He would also support just cause eviction legislation.

Glass states that closing the achievement gap would be another top priority on the Council. He believes that bringing jobs and economic development to the County is the best way to address this inequality.

Glass strongly supports strengthening the minimum wage law. He would support Ban the Box legislation.

Glass fully supports the BRT plan and pledges to work to secure funding and implement the plan.

With a magic wand, Glass would build White Oak overnight to bring thousands of jobs to the East County. With that tax base he would provide funding for afterschool programs and for Bus Rapid Transit.



TOM HUCKER
tomhucker.com

Delegate Tom Hucker has served as a representative from District 20 to the State Assembly since 2007. His work in Annapolis gives Hucker a long progressive record. Notably, he led the effort to pass a statewide living wage law in 2004 and to increase the minimum wage in 2005, and was part of other significant victories including marriage equality and the DREAM Act.

This year in Annapolis Hucker advocated for the minimum wage increase. Unfortunately, the bill that came out of his committee represented a significantly weakened compromise that was palatable to party leadership. He then voted to keep the indexing provision out of the bill. At the County level he pledges to work to strengthen the law by indexing the wage rate to inflation and increasing the wage for tipped workers.

Hucker states that both preservation and creation of new affordable

units is the right approach. If elected to the Council he would continue to preserve affordable housing by approving zoning that does not "up-zone" existing affordable units. He would also put more resources into the Housing Initiative Fund and reassess regulations that make affordable housing unprofitable to build.

Hucker advocates rent stabilization and other renter protections. At the state level he has introduced or co-sponsored legislation to increase rent stabilization, to give tenants more notice before condo conversions, and to reduce retaliatory evictions.

Hucker would use the Council's authority over the budget to have more oversight of the schools. He strongly supports Ban the Box and the BRT plan.

With a magic wand Hucker would increase the County's minimum wage to the Living Wage rate.

DISTRICT 5 *continued*



TERRILL NORTH
terrillnorth.com

Terrill North has a strong record of working for progressive elected officials in Congress and as a community activist. He was working on Capitol Hill when a young man was killed in his neighborhood; this inspired North to become more involved with youth mentoring in Takoma Park, where he now runs two nonprofit programs. He is running to bring a voice to the community he thinks is not currently represented on the Council.

North believes that the creation of new affordable units needs to be distributed across the County and not concentrated in the eastern half. He would use the County's zoning authority to require affordable units to be built in areas of the County where 60% or less of the school population receives free and reduced meals (FARMs). North supports rent stabi-

lization, but would start by proposing a system to stabilize rent for seniors and other vulnerable people.

To address the achievement gap, North believes the Council should increase grants to local nonprofits to leverage work in afterschool programs and provide funding for parent liaisons.

North supports strengthening the minimum wage law by indexing the wage to inflation and increasing the wage for tipped workers. North fully supports Ban the Box legislation, but asserts that more needs to be done, including strengthening diversion programs for first-time offenders and minor crimes, and workforce development and skills training for people returning from prison.



JEFFREY THAMES
jeffreythames.org

Jeffrey Thames has a compelling personal story and an impressive commitment to the community. As a pastor and director of a non-profit that works to combat addiction, homelessness and incarceration, he lives out his values in his daily work.

Thames fully supports indexing the County's minimum wage and increasing the tipped wage. He asserts that rent stabilization is a must. He also supports subsidies for renters and working with developers to provide cheaper and smaller units.

From his experience working with people previously incarcerated, he is a strong supporter of Ban the Box at the County level. Further, he notes that the County does not have a pre-release and reentry center that is needed to help returning citizens.

Thames is the only candidate we interviewed who does not support public financing for County elections.

With a magic wand Thames would create a "get along" program to ensure that "we all get along."