

Potrero Hill Democratic Club
District 10 Supervisor Candidate Debate
Tuesday, August 30, 2022 on Zoom
Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate name: Shamann Walton
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Please write a brief response (up to 200 words) to each question. Please email the completed questionnaire to contact_us@phdemclub.org by Sunday, August 28. The questionnaires will be made available online to club members.

1. Why are you running and why should we vote for you?

I believe everyone deserves a stable income, a clean and safe neighborhood, and an affordable place to live. That's why I've led on tough issues that make a real impact in San Franciscans' lives.

As the first Black man serving as President of the Board of Supervisors, I've fought hard to ensure that our vulnerable neighbors and working families have a voice in City Hall. I secured over \$20 million for rent relief and affordable housing, led the creation of the Dream Keeper Initiative to reinvest \$120 million into our city's Black community, fought against AAPI hate crimes, and mediated the process to reopen schools during the pandemic. As your Supervisor, I will continue to deliver resources to improve our neighborhoods and serve every San Franciscan.

2. What sets you apart from your opponent?

I was born in San Francisco and lived in public housing at an early age in Bayview and Potrero Hill. I worked in District 10 for decades and have spent the past 22 years of my life fighting to improve our neighborhoods. In my time, I've witnessed a once tight-knit public housing community become separate neighborhoods and lost many of my childhood friends to crime and violence. Because of those experiences, I wanted to devote my life to changing that reality and finding ways to inspire hope and opportunity for everyone concerned.

As the former president and member of the San Francisco Board of Education, I spearheaded the effort to close the achievement gap for Black, Latino, and special needs students and helped secure the funding for the school district's first African American Achievement and Leadership Initiative. As the former Executive Director at Young Community Developers (YCD), I worked vigorously to build close relationships with labor to provide job and career opportunities for residents and bring 100% affordable housing units to District 10.

As District 10 Supervisor, I'm incredibly proud of the work that our office and communities have accomplished together to address the biggest issues facing our District. There's still a lot of work to be done, but I want residents – and San Franciscans across the City – to know that I don't take the responsibility of Supervisor lightly. We've made progress on every issue that I promised to take action on my first day as Supervisor, and I'm ready and eager to continue doing the everyday work of building community and improving District 10's neighborhoods.

3. What are the top three issues facing District 10? How will you address these issues? How would your answer to this question be different if it considered only Potrero Hill and Dogpatch?

As D10 Supervisor, I've shown up every day to lead on the tough issues-- the ones that have made a real impact in San Franciscans' lives: (1) affordability and displacement; (2) public safety; (3) job security and stability. As I combat the above issues head-on, I will continue to work to address the systemic disparities in our housing, criminal justice, and labor systems to fight for our low-income and working-class neighborhoods, Black and Brown San Franciscans, immigrants, and all who have been historically marginalized.

4. If you are the incumbent, what accomplishments are you most proud of?

- *Leading the creation of the historic Dream Keeper Initiative, a first-of-its-kind citywide effort to reinvest \$120 million over the next two years into San Francisco's Black and African-American community.*
- *Expanding San Francisco's Language Access Ordinance to increase language accessible services to monolingual or limited English speaking residents.*
- *Creating the first African American Reparations Advisory Committee to craft recommendations for policies and programs that can radically improve the lives of Black San Franciscans*
- *Securing over \$20 million in funding for rent relief and social housing to assist renters and low-income workers in the aftermath of the pandemic.*
- *Establishing legislation for the right to return, giving former residents of public housing projects who've been displaced the right to return to their prior homes.*
- *Helping expand affordable housing opportunities for educators and middle-income families through the 100% Affordable Housing and Educator Streamlining Program*
- *Establishing the Bayview SAFE Navigation Center*
- *Implementing crucial eviction protections for renters including during the pandemic including a moratorium on all evictions, banning late fees, and extending payment periods for outstanding rent.*
- *Advocating to continue our successful Shelter-in-Place hotel program beyond the pandemic.*
- *Meeting with community-based organizations, town halls, and residents to create a new, comprehensive community process called the District 10 Community Safety Plan— a much-needed plan to expedite solutions to this senseless and tragic violence.*

- *Setting up the first Citywide Sheriff's Oversight Board and Office of Inspector General to increase accountability over the San Francisco Sheriff's Department by introducing and successfully leading the passage of Proposition D in 2020.*
- *Writing and passing the CAREN Act (Caution Against Racially Exploitative and Non-Emergencies) — which is now a model for cities across the nation — to crack down on racially biased police calls.*
- *Advocating for the expansion of mandatory local hiring*
- *Establishing the Work Force and Recovery Fund for the City College of San Francisco*
- *Passing the Early Education Economic Recovery Program, which provides \$25 million in interest-free loans and grants to early education programs to support 10,000 children across the City.*
- *Mediating the process to reopen schools during the pandemic between San Francisco Unified School District leadership and the United Educators of San Francisco*
- *Leading the successful passage of Proposition C: San Francisco Commissions for All in 2020, to allow non-citizen residents to serve on our city's Boards and Commissions.*
- *Bringing ESL classes back to Visitacion Valley*
- *Completing an historic \$3 million makeover of Shoreview Park*
- *Opening new, 7-acre bayfront Crane Cove Park*
- *Expanding and revitalizing India Basin Shoreline Park and Jackson Playground*
- *Successfully passing Measure RR to fully fund Caltrain services*
- *Worked with the Transportation Authority and SFMTA to improve transit access for our District, and across the city*
- *Making our streets safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers with key traffic calming measures*

5. If you are the challenger, describe something the incumbent did that you would have done differently.

6. How would you address the unfair burden the east side of the City has suffered from bearing the lion's share of market-rate development?

I have been a staunch advocate for affordable housing as the District 10 Supervisor and prior to being elected. We were able to secure over 30% affordability for both the Pier 70 and Power Station projects (that also include community benefits for residents). Those projects required less, as they are private, but we would not accept less. I was also able to rezone a parcel to secure 100% affordable housing at the Homeless Prenatal Program Site on Potrero, and will continue to push all developers to be responsible and prioritize affordable housing.

When projects don't provide higher levels of affordability, I will continue to do everything I can to fight against all irresponsible projects.

7. How do you define affordable housing? What should SF be doing to get more of it?

To me, “affordable housing” means residents are not spending over a third or more of their income towards rent. Rental prices are astronomical in San Francisco compared to the rest of our country, with prices reaching \$3,500-4000 per month on average. This is a crisis that is causing seniors, low-income families, and working-class people to be forced out of San Francisco. That is why so many residents have multiple roommates, live with family in multigenerational households, or in the worst cases, stay in abusive relationships for housing. San Franciscans deserve better -- this is not the reality that we should be accepting.

We need to continue focusing on responsible development. When projects are part of a community process, we see success in high numbers. Working together is the key for more housing.

8. How would you protect vulnerable families and communities from displacement?

For far too long, public housing residents — particularly Black San Franciscans who have been disproportionately affected by decades of redevelopment and gentrification — have been pushed out of San Francisco. Bringing back families and residents to their original neighborhoods will help communities return to the diverse, vibrant hubs they once were— and help ensure that families can remain rooted in the communities they helped build for generations to come. That’s why as District 10 Supervisor I established legislation for the right to return, giving former residents of public housing projects who’ve been displaced the right to return to their prior homes. Our legislation prioritizes former HOPE SF residents in what used to be the Hunters View, Alice Griffith, Sunnydale, and Potrero Hill housing projects.

I will continue to advocate for building 100% affordable housing and holding developers responsible for community benefit packages that support walkability, mixed-use, and environmental concerns.

I will work to address the barriers so that residents actually get access to housing. Too many of our residents win lottery housing but are not qualifying for the actual housing unit. I am committed to working on removing barriers to making families eligible for these housing units and monitoring our city’s progress at getting our residents housed. Using an equity lens, my questions are always going to be about who is getting in and what are the issues that are preventing populations from getting access to city resources.

9. Do you support overturning the Ellis Act? Costa-Hawkins?

Yes, I support the overturning of the Ellis and Costa-Hawkins act.

10. Considering the longtime history of fraud and coverup, and the increased climate-related dangers highlighted by the recent Civil Grand Jury report, what will you do to encourage the Navy and the City to correct and complete the Hunters Point Shipyard Superfund site cleanup?

I have continuously pushed the Navy to be responsible for all aspects of clean-up at the Shipyard and surrounding community. The Navy needs to also pay for any medical issues that exist for families and communities in the area. Unfortunately, at times the Navy has not listened to the community voice and this has been extremely frustrating as we have no jurisdiction over the Navy as the City and County of San Francisco.

Immediately after my election, as promised, I did call for an independent review of the protocols for testing on Parcel A utilizing UC Scientists and Professors. Much more needs to be done, but the City has never ordered that type of review prior to my election. In addition, I have required the City and developers to conduct soil testing before additional building on Parcel A (even though they say there is no radioactive danger on Parcel A).

I did call for a hearing in response to the Civil Grand Jury's report and have called for the Navy, EPA, OCII, and DPH to present. Community voice will continue to be a part of all next steps.

Thank you for taking the time to fill this out, and thanks for running!