

# Coalition for a Better Memphis Candidate Questionnaire Memphis City Council

## Jesse Jeff – District 7

1. Please describe your background and your qualifications for this position? What experiences caused you to run for this office? What unique qualities would you bring to this position and what differentiates you from other candidates in your race?

First of All, I have a background in law enforcement, and education. I hold a Master of Science from Christian Brothers University, and a Bachelor of Arts from LeMoyne- Owen College. I have been stunned by the frequency and venomous attacks on public servants, and collective bargaining. I have especially been alarmed at the new phenomenon of vilifying teachers. Someone needs to step into the breach and fight for these people. This is what compelled me to enter the race. Several factors differentiate me from all the other candidates in this race. I am a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, and the United States Army. I am a veteran of the Saint Louis City Sheriff's Department. I am a veteran teacher for Memphis City Schools. I am pro union, and a member of NEA, TEA, and MEA.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

2. What is your vision for the City? How would you use this office to achieve the vision? I have a vision of a closer knit community where racial polarization no longer exists. I see a community with a vibrant economy, and a well educated population. I would use this office to make one Memphis more than a campaign slogan but a reality. This could be accomplished through public service announcements, rallies, collaboration and consensus of the entire council.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

3. How do you plan on insuring that there is diversity, (including race, age, gender and socio-economic) represented in the development of public policy and government?

The best way to insure that there is diversity represented in the development of public policy and government is to bring all of the stakeholders to the table. Don't just bring them to the table for a dog and pony show but insure that all participate, and contribute on an equal level.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

4. What are the three greatest issues facing the City of Memphis today?

The three greatest issues facing the city of Memphis are homelessness, education, and the widening socio- economic divide.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

5. What role should the City of Memphis government play in promoting the economic development for the community? What specific initiatives or actions would you promote and/or support?

The City of Memphis should play a major role in promoting the economic development for the community. This should be done within the parameters of the Councils legislative authority. An environment that is conducive and favorable to business, and fair to workers at the same time. Payments in Lieu of taxes are great but should not be continued in perpetuity.

6. How would you strengthen and support existing neighborhoods that are within the urban core and what barriers to community redevelopment do you see in these areas today? How do you propose to address the current blight in many of these areas? Existing neighborhoods could be strengthened and supported through establishing liaisons with community organizations and agencies. Some of the barriers to community redevelopment are a lack of communication, and coordination between inter- governmental agencies, and a climate of non-cooperation, and apathy of local politicians. I plan to address the current blight in many areas by aggressively enforcing city ordinances that address the issue. People who are cited should be given an opportunity to clean their property, and offered assistance as needed. Absentee landlords should be investigated more aggressively.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

7. What do you regard as the greatest obstacle or barrier to growth in the City today? I regard the racial polarization of my home town as the greatest obstacle or barrier to growth in the City today. It is not us against them; we are all in this together. If we don't all swim together we will all drown together.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

8. What is the role of the City Council? What do you think about the relationship between the Council and the City Mayor; as well as other elected or appointed bodies, such as: Shelby County Commissioners, State of Tennessee Shelby County Delegation, MLGW, Greater Memphis Chamber, Downtown Memphis Commission, etc. The role of the City Council is to consider the mayor's budget request, set tax rates, establish other lawful taxes and fees make laws that govern the city, and hear appeals for some city government boards, and agencies. I think that the separation of powers should not be abridged to insure that no branch has power to directly control the operation of any other branch. The mayor and the council should have a relationship however, it is vital in the technology age to have a viable way to communicate, coordinate, and respond in a timely manner to the aforementioned bodies.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

9. With regard to the crime rate, what current strategies would you support and what changes would you propose if any? With regard to the crime rate I think Blue Crush is an excellent strategy and should be taken to a higher level. For a long time community oriented policing has been advocated, however it hasn't been fully implemented. Police Officers should get out of their cars and walk two or three blocks in either direction, once or twice a shift. Officers should meet the neighbors, business owners, pastors, and drug dealers. Police officers should intimately get to know the community they patrol. They should not just be reactive as responding to a call.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

10. Would you be willing to submit to a background check and then allow the results to be published? Yes

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

11. Do you support the local ethics ordinance? Is the Ordinance sufficient, and if not, what changes would you recommend? I do support the local ethics ordinance. The ordinance should be more inclusive, and encompassing. Amendment 5344 section 3d of ordinance 5206 is ambiguous and subjective. It leaves wiggle room for someone to cheat. It needs to be looked at again and changed if necessary. I have a problem with some of the language and I quote "If the gift is given for a non business purpose and is motivated by a close personal friendship."

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

12. What are your ideas with regards to the City's responsibility for funding Memphis City Schools? If Memphis is to be all it can be we need a well educated and well trained population. Not only do I think it is the Cities responsibility for funding Memphis City Schools I think the maintenance of effort should never be abridged or interrupted. Furthermore, when the two systems merge the City should contribute its fair share to ensure that all students in our area are successful. A highly educated citizenry is an intangible that shouldn't be measured in dollars and cents.

MEMPHIS City Council Questionnaire 2011

Name: Jesse Jeff

13. What are the Council's responsibilities for making the City contract bidding process more equitable and transparent? I think that with the advent of so many corrupt politicians the Council should be vigilant in ensuring that the contract bidding is both equitable and transparent. There should be no hint of corruption or impropriety.