

MEMPHIS MAYOR QUESTIONNAIRE 2009

NAME: Carol Chumney

1a. Please describe your background and your qualifications for this position. What experiences caused you to run for this office. What previous experience qualifies you more than your opponents to lead on Day 1?

I was in first grade at the Memphis public schools, when tragedy struck our city and nation with the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. A few years later, I remember a walk-out on the Shady Grove Elementary playground by some children to protest desegregation. I am proud that I made a defining choice to stand for equality and stay on the playground. I believe this early experience and others during that time helped prepare me for public service.

My background includes education in the Memphis City Schools, graduating in 1979 as an honors student from White Station High School. In 1983, I graduated from the University of Memphis, Magna Cum Laude as a Presidential Scholar with a B.A. in Economics and History with Honors. I was elected President of the Student Government, and voted the "Outstanding Economics Student" by the faculty. I earned my Juris Doctorate from the University of Memphis Law School in 1986, and was a Herff Law Scholar and Editor-in-Chief of the Law Review.

Upon graduation, I served as a judicial clerk to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. In 1987, I entered private practice as a trial attorney, and worked for 16 years at Glankler Brown, first as an associate, and then earning a partnership at the Memphis law firm. During this time, I was elected President of the Memphis Federal Bar Association. In 2002, I established my own law office.

In addition to working as an attorney, I also was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1990, at the age of 29. Over the next 13 years, I served in various capacities as Chair of the House Children & Family Affairs Committee, Majority Whip, Shelby County Delegation Chairwoman, and as a member of the House Finance, Judiciary, and Education Committees. After two babies were found dead on the same hot July day in child care vans in Memphis, I took on the tough battle of standing up to powerful opposing interests, and passed groundbreaking bipartisan legislation for child care reform, as reported in TIME magazine and *The New York Times*.

As a state legislator, I stood up to powerful interests and built a consensus to pass legislation for many statewide reforms. I was recognized with statewide awards for my reform legislation for children, better consumer protection, protection of the environment, better health care (including the Memphis Plan for the Memphis Church Health Center), stronger protections for victims of crime, and for stronger regional cooperation.

In October 2003, I was elected to the Memphis City Council, and chaired the Public Service and Neighborhoods; Public Safety & Homeland Security; and the MLGW Committees. I exposed budgetary problems, and pushed for reforms both at City Hall and in the MLGW public utility, including the successful repeal of the twelve year pension for elected and appointed officials.

In 2007, I ran for Mayor of Memphis, finishing a close second to the 16 year incumbent, garnering 35% of the vote. This year, I was recognized by the local clergy with a "Power of One" award for my volunteer efforts as a private citizen to assist victims of the storm which ravaged the city in June 2009. I am a person of faith, and regularly attend both Calvary Episcopal Church downtown, and Hope Presbyterian Church in Cordova.

I am best qualified to lead this city because I have no ties to the recent administrations, and have the energy, the proven track record of getting things done, and the commitment to bring Memphis together and make it a world class city.

1b. What previous experience do you have running a business, managing employees or controlling a budget?

I have run my own business, the Carol Chumney Law Firm, since 2002. As an attorney in private practice for over 22 years, I have represented and advised individuals and businesses in employment and other related matters, negotiated contracts, and mediated matters.

As a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives Finance Committee, I oversaw a 20 billion dollar state budget. As Chair of the City 's O & M Budget Committee, I oversaw the City's 500 million dollar operating budget.

I have served on not-for-profit boards, overseeing employees and budgets for those organizations.

I have run 16 campaign organizations (winning 14 elections), and managed hundreds of volunteers.

I have an Economics degree from the Univ. of Memphis, and was voted the "Outstanding Economics Student" by the faculty in 1983.

1c. Beginning with the most recent position, please list all public offices you have held. Please include positions on appointed boards or commissions.

State Representative- 1990-2003

Memphis City Council-2004-2007

Tennessee Women's Legislative Caucus- Chair 2003

Shelby County Legislative Delegation- Chair 2002

Tennessee Supreme Court Commission on Foster Care

Tennessee Supreme Court Commission on Gender Fairness

1d. If you have previously run for elected office but were not elected, please list those races below.

Mayor of Memphis- 2d place (35% of the vote)- 2007.

County Mayor-2d place Democratic primary- 2002.

2a. What is your vision for the City—how would you use this office to achieve the vision?

After over 40 years since the tragic death of Dr. Martin Luther King in Memphis, it's now time for us to come together and heal, and fight the giants of crime, poverty, kids not having hope or a future, and high unemployment. I've spent 17 years in the trenches fighting for the people of Memphis in the state legislature and then at City Hall. I've spent 22 years fighting for justice for my clients as an attorney. My slogan is Count on Carol because I have a proven track record of taking on the tough issues, and getting things done. That's what I'll do as the next Memphis Mayor.

2b. What are the three greatest issues facing the City of Memphis today?

Cutting crime, making sure our youth attend school and have something positive to do after school, bringing jobs to Memphis.

2c. What issues do you believe will shape the City over the next few years?

Bringing our city together; cutting crime; making sure our youth attend school and have something positive to do after school; neighborhood revitalization; bringing jobs to Memphis; working to reduce the tax burden on our citizens.

3. How do you plan on insuring that there is a diversity represented in the development of public policy, staffing and appointments, and city contracting?

As a state legislator, I passed the Open Appointments Act which provided for more inclusion for appointments to state boards and commissions. As Mayor, I will be fair and seek the best talent for inclusion in public policy making, staffing, appointments, and for city contracts. I will also be fair and inclusive with regard to city contracting.

4. 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 regarding both large and small businesses?

We need to increase business and residential development in Memphis. We know that we have lost many citizens over the past few years due to high taxes, crime, and the lack of a positive vision for the city. We have to turn this around, work to keep our tax base in the city, and attract new citizens to Memphis. My vision is to make Memphis the economic engine of the South. A reduction in crime will fuel the growth and support the efforts of large and small businesses in the city. We also need to partner with the Chamber of Commerce and other business leaders to attract international business. As the Mayor, I will be an advocate and promote our city everyday in every way possible.

5. How would you strengthen and support existing neighborhoods that are within the City of Memphis and what barriers to community development do you see in these areas? How do you propose to address the neighborhood blight in a proactive manner?

I will get the vacant houses torn down, work with developers and contractors to make sure job sites are protected from theft, partner Community Development Corporations with businesses, and bring stakeholders together to develop and implement neighborhood revitalization plans. I will work to increase federal and state funding for low and moderate income housing.

6. Discuss the current administration structure and do you have a vision for altering this structure? How would you strengthen a culture of accountability and outcome based on performance standards for Divisions of City Government as well as appointed positions?

I will get the best talent we can, and hire people who are competent and capable for the applicable positions. I will hire based upon experience and qualifications, and stop the corruption and cronyism. I will have a no tolerance policy for corruption. I will implement performance audits for each city department, as done at the state level, in order to measure results. I will work to reduce unnecessary positions.

7. Give us your thoughts on a metro form of government and/or consolidated services.

I support consolidating services and/or a metro form of government. We first need to build our relationships and support in the county with honest discussions about our joint future, and development of a plan that is a “win win” for both city and county residents.

While the current County Mayor now says he supports a metro government, in his seven years in office, there has not been any progress. Instead, we’ve seen the dissolution of the consolidated library system, and the metro gang unit.

I will listen to and work with all elected officials in the city, county, region, and other stakeholders and citizens to form the partnerships and relationships that we need in order to come together.

8. What is the City’s responsibility to Memphis City Schools? How should the relationship between the City and Memphis City Schools be structured?

As a graduate of the Memphis City Schools, I have always supported public education. The City should honor its current obligations to the schools, and work with the MCS to secure adequate state and federal funding. As Mayor, I will work with the MCS School Superintendent to reduce truancy and to protect children inside and outside of their schools. I will work with businesses and the faith-based community to increase opportunities for youth with after-school and summer jobs programs. I will also make sure that our Workforce Development funds are fully utilized, and to increase the availability of GED programs for easy access throughout the community.

9. How can the Mayor effectively contribute to the reduction of the crime rate in the City of Memphis? What current strategies would you continue to support and what changes would you propose?

In 2008, the Memphis Business Journal reported that the Memphis MSA ranked 2d in crime. This is unacceptable. Whether the statistics are reported correctly or not, this is the perception that businesses and families considering a relocation have of our city.

It’s time for new energetic leadership to effectively address this problem. I will better manage our police department, and hire the authorized complement of officers. I will work to make sure our officers are properly trained. I will review our internal security within the department to ensure that deployment decisions are not disclosed in advance. As Mayor, I will get results.

10. State your position regarding residency restrictions for City workers, including police officers.

As a City Councilmember I voted against the proposed ordinance to restrict hiring to city residents. The public voted for the residency restrictions. I support a county-wide approach.

11. Are you familiar with the current budget and what would be your major budget priorities?

Yes. My priorities are to reduce crime, support community centers and neighborhood revitalization efforts, bring jobs, and increase efficiencies so as to reduce the tax burden on families. The County property taxes have risen 24% in the past seven years. As a City Councilmember, I proposed cuts in the

budget, and voted against the property tax increase in 2005. As Mayor, I will work to provide quality city services, bring efficiencies, and reduce the tax burden on citizens.

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

Yes.