

**The Coalition for a Better Memphis
Candidate Questionnaire
Memphis Mayor
Detric Stigall**

1a. I possess over fifteen years combined experience dealing with Accounting, Finance, Personnel, Executive Management and Administrator skills. I am a self-motivated troubleshooter who possesses solid analytical and problem-solving skills and I know how to work harmoniously with others.

I am running for Mayor because the time is right to deal with a fresh perspective on Government and my experiences dealing directly with citizens in the Community Centers, Senior Centers, Aquatics, Summer Camps and Emergency Shelters qualify me to lead on day one

1b. I have served as Owner of Stigall Financial Services for the past 15 years. My responsibilities have included performing accounting, finance and managerial functions for a variety of clients. Professional services offered include consultations, tax preparations, bookkeeping, budgets and property management to ensure that clients are operating efficiently while enhancing their profitability.

I currently serve as the Administrator of Recreation Services for the Division of Park Services and I am responsible for overseeing an \$8.7M Operating Budget and a \$1.5M Capital Improvements Budget. Additionally, I provide monthly financial reports to my superiors and I am responsible for quarterly forecasting.

1c. I have never held a public office. I have never been appointed to a board or commission. I view myself to be a public servant and a concerned citizen

1d. I have never previously run for an elected office.

2a. It is my vision that this city would prosper. That is why my campaign is green. It is the color of prosperity. It can eliminate the thoughts of a black, white, yellow or a red Memphis and serve as a color of unity for all people. If we were all prospering and achieving our economical potential, I doubt if racism would continue.

I would use the office of Mayor to achieve this unity by including all opinions of all people that make up this great city of good abode and by allowing the citizens to feel a sense of ownership and pride for this city.

2b. The three greatest issues facing Memphis today are Education Funding, Education Programming and Crime. However, these issues have a trickle down effect. If the schools were properly funded, then the programming could increase and the crime would eventually decrease due to the children becoming more engaged in education for their future.

2.c I believe this special election for the next Mayor will definitely shape Memphis over the next few years. We haven't had new leadership in nearly 18 years and the city is anxious about its future.

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3. There are many nationalities represented within the Memphis community. I plan on aggressively seeking out these nationalities and making them feel welcomed. They are taxpayers that are privy to the same benefits that we are. However, they have a different opinion that should be included in the development of public policy. I would see to it that the staffing at City Hall and other divisions are representing our culture by employing staff that represents the “New” Memphis. City contracting would continue to have policies and procedures in place that makes it fair to all that enter into the bid process.

4. Local government should always be the first to promote economic development. However, I would set initiatives to promote this development within the inner city. Areas like Whitehaven, South Memphis, North Memphis, Raleigh and Frayser don’t get to realize the value of their tax payments and often feel neglected due to the development in downtown and mid-town areas. I would also mandate that small businesses obtain a percentage of the work in partnership with larger businesses. When economic development is taking place, many should be allowed to benefit and feel a sense of pride with the change that will come to those dilapidated areas.

5. As answered in the previous question, these areas would need to feel some inclusion in the decision making process. To address the concerns of the citizens, you must ask them. Often times in government, projects are pursued without ideas from those who live in the area. Proactively, I would make sure that citizens are included by calling a meeting to address their needs when the project is birthed. Since it will possibly take 5 years from the point the project is approved by council, the citizens should be addressed again in case the particular need changes.

6. The current Administrative structure has the Mayor position serving as the CEO of the city. The position appoints a Chief Administrative Officer who is responsible for handling the day to day operations of the City. The Mayor is responsible for appointing Directors to the 15 divisions within city government as well as appointing individuals to various boards within the City. The Mayor also appoints Deputy Directors to ensure that the Directors are supported by competent and capable staff. I believe this structure is satisfactory and the elected mayor should be able to appoint those that qualify according to the responsibilities.

All employees should be held accountable. Especially in government since the funding source of all salaries comes from the taxpayer. The reviews of these individuals should also be publicized to allow the citizens the opportunity to determine if these appointed employees are meeting new standards by implementing programs and being accessible to the community to answer any questions.

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7. I believe Memphis has surpassed the opportunity to form a metro form of government and/or consolidated services. As a taxpayer myself, I never truly realize the benefits of my tax payments for the County. I never see the Sheriff's department in my neighborhood and I don't get invited to the Shelby County Schools Board meetings even though I pay taxes for them. Just for the record, I don't know of anyone whose kids are in that system.

As for Memphis City Schools, my taxes are paid to the County and they are responsible for funding MCS. My daughters attend MCS but I, living within the City limits, am double taxed for schools which decreases the services offered by the city. With that said, I do not support consolidation of the governments.

Under the current plan issued, the voting percentage of African Americans, which is the majority, would diminish to less than 50%. The outlying cities will keep their charters and become eligible to vote for the City Mayor. However, city residents will not be able to vote for the outlying cities Mayor's or City Managers and Memphis will lose its charter. Additionally, the inner city residents are already paying the majority of taxes to local government in this area and the taxes would in all likely hood increase. Thus, causing more of an inequity than what currently exists.

Furthermore, the County residents are happy with the way things are because they have a benefit since the taxes are disproportionate. Also, they don't really want to be associated with the City of Memphis. However, they still want to enjoy all of the amenities that this city has to offer.

8. Under state law, the City does not have a responsibility to Memphis City Schools. Shelby County is responsible under state law to fund City and County schools. The major funding source for this effort comes from property taxes paid by all Shelby County residents. In my opinion, our former Mayor felt empathy for the city school system and offered additional funds to support it. Consequently, MCS became attached to those funds over the years and probably overspent because of the additional funding. Now, reality has set in for the City and MCS and funding this year has become the major topic of our City. If elected Mayor, I will develop a plan to make sure that we never face this issue again.

For this question, I think the relationship should be restructured. There should be a city ordinance placed before the citizens that will allow them to vote to carry the expenses of the city school system. If it passes, our legislatures should attempt to have the state law amended so that city residents (the City) fund city schools and the county (Shelby) be made responsible for funding county schools. Additionally, the city resident's county taxes should be decreased accordingly. In my opinion, city residents wouldn't mind funding City schools no matter what the cost. They just don't want to pay for the county since they see no benefit in funding them.

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9. The Mayor can effectively contribute to the reduction of the crime rate by continuing to monitor how effective the Police Director is. Also, by closely monitoring any new strategies that may develop, the Mayor will be able to determine its effectiveness. The implementation of the strategy as well as measuring the outcome can reveal if it is truly effective.

I would not support the current strategy of Blue Crush unless there is something that can prove to me that it works for the City and doesn't continue to put the same individuals in jail time after time. I would implement community policing. We still have co-act/mini precincts within our Community Centers and citizens feel safe in those communities. Even with the police car being parked or whether the police are roaming, citizens like seeing a visible presence. I would make sure that we bring all policemen that have gone through the academy with the objective of becoming a policeman, back to the streets to protect and serve our citizens.

10. I believe that all City workers should reside within the City of Memphis limits. This includes Police Officers.

11. I am familiar with the current budget as I worked in the Budget Office for the City of Memphis for 3 years preparing budgets for all divisions. My major budget priority would be making sure divisions like Park Services had the necessary funding needed to operate and be pleasing in the public's eye. Park Services deals with the public more than any other division. Furthermore, I would make sure that the other divisions are holding the line on budgeted expenditures. However, I would also investigate the possibility of generating more revenues to offset the expenses.

12. I would be willing to submit to a background check and allow the results to be published. I don't have anything to hide.