

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PLANNING COMMISSION CANDIDATE

**CANDIDATE: Stephan Price**

**PLEASE RESPOND IN WRITING BY: Wednesday, February 5, 2020, at 5 p.m.**

PLEASE SEND TO: Lynda Rose  
Assistant to Mayor Chuck Bennett  
VIA EMAIL: lrose@cityofsalem.net  
OR VIA FAX: 503-588-6354

1. Please explain your understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Planning Commission.

As noted in the Salem Revised Code, the Planning Commission is responsible is responsible for advising in the areas of changes in property boundaries, usage, and development, land use applications, signage, zoning and development. Additionally, the Commission recommends plans for promotion, development and regulation while promoting the public welfare, considering safety, comfort, and health, among others. Responsibilities for Commissioners include attending the twice-monthly meetings during their four-year term of office and while avoiding conflicts of interest and ensuring professional, appropriate decorum. (SRC 6.010.)

2. What skills, knowledge and perspectives do you possess that will enable you to be an effective member of the Commission?

I possess a wide variety of skills and attributes that may be of interest to the Salem Planning Commission. Prior to my involvement in public education, I worked in numerous and diverse professions, including retail management, auto sales and service, janitorial, manufacturing, security, insurance, and sales, among others. The scope of this work allowed me to gain a wide variety of experience in many different aspects of society, permitting a very good understanding of the multitude of challenges and concerns facing most Oregonians.

My work in public education began once I completed a Bachelor's Degree in Education. I have been fortunate to have served in numerous capacities in schools, including as an elementary classroom teacher, specials teacher, program coordinator, etc. Subsequent to the attainment of a Master's Degree in School Administration, I served variously as an Elementary Assistant Principal, SpEd Vice Principal, Principal, and mostly recently as a district-level administrator and Program Director. Most of my

educational career has been spent working with students from diverse backgrounds, such as homeless, migrant, TAG, Special Education, dual language, bilingual, etc. My work with these special populations informs much of my thinking and decision making.

I am well known in the educational community as an innovator and collaborator, and my bilingual/biliterate abilities in English/Spanish combine with my diverse work experience when connecting and communicating with individuals of diverse backgrounds and origins to gain a deep understanding of the issues involved and to propose new and thoughtful solutions to problems.

I have previously served in the Citizen's Advisory Traffic Commission, or CATC, in Salem. That experience gave me the opportunity to learn how city commissions function in depth. In addition, I have previously served on the board of various nonprofit organizations as well as governmental agencies. My nonprofit work includes the following:

- President/CEO, Young Leaders Program (current)
- Webmaster/Registrar, Oregon Association for Comprehensive Education (OACE, current)
- President, Oregon Association for Talented & Gifted (OATAG, previous)
- Emcee, Oregon Statewide Spelling Championship

In my position as a district school administrator, I have also supported numerous parent groups and run Family University, a program that supports families from modest economic circumstances as they strive to support their children and families all while seeking to achieve the American Dream by learning to read, speak English, and attain their GED.

The totality of my work and life experiences has provided me with a very unique perspective on most areas. This makes me an ideal candidate as I perceive things very differently from most people, because I am able to draw upon a lifetime of different ways of seeing people and policies.

3. One of the most common application types you will hear at the Planning Commission is a Comprehensive Plan Change and Zone Change, where an applicant wants to change their zoning to facilitate a development proposal. What is your perspective regarding responding to the current market versus maintaining a long term vision?

Residents like to have easy access to attractive, clean and safe areas including residential and commercial zones located near work zones, with liberal green spaces and areas for recreation. Helping to ensure a proper balance between the competing demands for our limited space is a critical role for the commission. As new ideas and

proposals come to the commission, each should be evaluated against the existing city ordinances and regulations and balanced against the wants and needs of the residents impacted as well as the developer's desires.

One area that may need to be addressed is that Salem seems to lack a strong identity wherein residents have a strong connection to the city. While residents often have an attachment to their neighborhoods, that same attachment often seems to be missing when it comes to Salem as a whole. Part of this perceived indifference may result from planning decisions. As such, we should strive for a Salem that has a strong identity among residents where they are excited to get involved.

4. What are some examples of how you believe Salem has done a good job of land use and transportation planning? What are some areas for improvement?

Overall, I believe that Salem has been doing a good job with regard to land use and transportation planning. Compared to many cities of similar size (or larger!) Salem is very livable and enjoys well-flowing traffic, even during times of heavy volume. Most areas are clearly and intelligently zoned so as to allow individuals easy access to residential, commercial and industrial areas. Green spaces, setbacks, and other areas also work well.

One area Salem needs to improve is in its collaboration with the federal government over railways in North Salem. Having previously lived in that area, the noise and nuisance of large locomotives crisscrossing streets and suburbs has a definite impact on livability on the residents. Another area for work is addressing the issues of homelessness. The situation is grows worse daily, and a comprehensive plan to address and assist Salem's most vulnerable populations should be conceived and implemented immediately.