



2025 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Sue Timberlake

Office Sought: City Councilor Northampton, MA, Ward 7

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(A) Your Candidacy

1. What would be your top three priorities if elected to serve?

Get our finances ready for what is coming down on us from the Federal Level

2. What qualifies you to hold this office?

- Retired from active politics (in Belmont) moved out here and then all this hit the fan. So I'm hoping for 1 term. We need to be ready and talking civilly to each other. We can do this. Northampton is a great city, and we need to honor that.
- Better Angels,
- Successfully re-engineered large complex organizations
- Helped Belmont get back on track (office of the Selectmen during polarized events).
- Grad degree Policy and Management
- Director level positions leading re-imagining systems.
- optimistic

3. What is the one policy you've seen pioneered in another city that you'd most like to adopt locally?

Convinced powers that be to open up GIC for Cities and Towns to participate. (Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts was behaving badly and they needed competition and a wake up call.)

(B) Open-Ended Policy Questions

1. **Given state law, municipalities in Massachusetts are limited in their taxing power. What opportunities do you see for the city to raise revenue to support essential city services?**

Northampton needs to be careful- we already have lots of revenues, but we are not spending for the future. (Restaurant taxes, Cannabis taxes, parking fees, storm water run off fees).

2. **What are your top priorities for ensuring that all students in your city can receive a high-quality public education?**

I am not running for the School Committee-whose has authority and responsibility to do that. If I could, I would make sure that citizens vote for highly qualified School Committee members, that dare to think differently about how we are teaching our children. Only 53 % of 3rd Grade reading at grade level is not something to be proud of here in Northampton or throughout Massachusetts.

3. **What can your city do to help protect immigrant communities under attack from ICE and ensure genuine community safety?**

Have local police push back on ICE folks that aren't wearing badges and cover their faces. (Arrest them if necessary.)

4. **What are your top three policy priorities for making your city climate-resilient, and how would you ensure that equity is at the center of any such efforts?**

Start supporting the future of the hydrogen economy. It is my belief that electricity cannot do it for us. Other countries are way ahead of us on this. (Solar and wind electrolyze water for fuel). England has built 18 wheelers and is testing them.

5. **What steps would you take to reduce dependence on cars and better facilitate the ability of city residents to safely get around by walking, biking, or public transit?**

I tried to get Romney administration to make the T free. While not politically viable then, I think it may be possible now (to make public transportation free).

6. What policies will you advocate for to ensure that your city can be a place that is affordable for residents to live at any stage of life?

Northampton has to be affordable for all of us. Re-engineer city services to match what is needed in 2025, rather than the 1980's.

7. [If relevant] How would you assess your city's MBTA Communities Act rezoning efforts so far?

Not sure if it might affect Northampton in some way. I will check it out.

8. What strategies would you employ to resist federal overreach from the Trump Administration while protecting critical services and funding for residents?

This is going to take some in depth answers on a huge number of issues. Overwhelming response and pushback from all Cities and Towns and States is required. (and I am an old fashioned republican whose party has abandoned their ideals.) Short targeted answers- see above.

9. How would you model transparency and accountability if elected?

Like I do every day in my jobs, and on Civil Politics and how I did working on Health Care Policy for a Democratic candidate for Governor, and a Republican candidate for Governor

(C) Yes/No Policy Questions

1. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools? **YES/ NO: NO, they are important for a lot of children with different learning styles.**
2. Do you support the creation of an unarmed, community-based emergency response program, separate from the Police Department, to respond to mental and behavioral health crises? **YES/ NO: No this responsibility belongs to the States.**
3. If your community has not already, do you support adopting the new specialized stretch code, which would require new construction and major renovations to be built to a very high-efficiency standard with all-electric (as opposed to fossil fuel) heating and cooling systems? **YES/ NO: No, I do not support the tactic. We need to be more sophisticated and trust property owners more. We need more housing and this has the opposite chilling effect. Later, when we have enough housing for everyone, maybe.**

4. Do you support fare-free public transit? **YES / NO: YES**
5. Do you support the expansion of the network of permanent, protected bike lanes in your city? **YES / NO: No: bicycles belong on the street on local roads. Ask any serious bicyclist you know and they will tell you.**
6. Would you support a home rule petition to establish a small transfer fee on high-end real estate transactions to create dedicated funding for affordable housing production and preservation? **YES / NO: NO we cannot regulate our way out of the housing shortage. Lower the barriers to building homes.**
7. Would you support a home rule petition to enable the city to stabilize rents? **YES / NO NO: I saw this in Cambridge- it doesn't work, it makes it worse. Keep the speculators from buying housing....instead.**
8. According to the American Library Association, in 2022 there were at least 45 attempts to restrict access to books in MA schools, disproportionately books that speak to the experiences of LGBTQ students and students of color. Would you oppose such book-banning efforts if they occurred in your city? **YES / NO; Absolutely oppose book banning. It is a scary development.**

(D) Additional Comments

(Use this space to make any final comments you deem important for progressive voters assessing your candidacy.) Progressive voters will not vote for me, but I hope they consider what I am saying as an old fashioned moderate Republican. (Prochoice, pro single payer, pro paying our way and being smart with our money. We moderate (modern) republicans are almost extinct! Our voices can add to the discussion.