

QUESTIONNAIRE

GREEN PARTY OF ALAMEDA COUNTY 2014 ENDORSEMENT DECISION

Please email your responses to: GPAC-VoterGuide@yahoogroups.com.
In the subject line, please include "Oakland Mayor"

If it is not possible for you to email, please mail your responses to:
Oakland Mayor
c/o Green Party of Alameda County ,
2022A Blake Street * Berkeley, CA 94704

Please respond by Saturday, August 23, 2014

Name: Einstein

Phone:

Email: EinsteinForOakland@gmail.com

Website: einsteinforoakland.org

Note: You may respond to any question with a link to your website or other posted positions. For the yes/no questions, please answer yes or no and if you wish to add to your answer, feel free to do so.

1. Motivation -- Why did you choose to run for City office?

Einstein intends to be a voice in this campaign for what is right and what is needed by many Oakland residents, without concern for what is legal or politically feasible. A role in government for everyone is what is meant by *democracy*; financial independence for all benefits all; and the protection of civil rights by governing officials is necessary for full democratic participation in our society. Expressed abstractly, achieving these conditions is what motivates Einstein to run for Mayor of Oakland.

To the detriment of all, candidates too often appeal to segments of society while leaving other segments excluded from determining social priorities. The demands of citizens in possession of some wealth are given greater consideration than to those made by citizens who lack the resources to make campaign contributions or to organize or play a supportive role in organizations promoting their demands.

The law and the application of law is unjust in far too many instances. Public officials and wealthy citizens find protection in the courts while those struggling to meet their basic needs go without sufficient income; are viewed with unfounded suspicion; and are detained, brutalized, and deprived of property without cause.

Too many candidates accept historical and legal limitations placed on the offices they seek as they assemble their campaign platforms. They survey the political landscape and devise a strategy for governing that they calculate to be achievable. In doing so, they create low expectations for themselves and inspire electorates with equally low expectations. In pursuit of *full and equal democratic participation*, Einstein offers a platform intended to inspire those excluded or marginalized by the current political process to participate in knocking down the walls of power and enforce their rights.

2. Program and Priorities -- Elected office provides the opportunity to proactively lead by placing new ideas on the agenda for consideration and development. What are some specific ideas you intend to pursue if elected? What do you believe are the main priorities for the City?

The most important priority for an Einstein Administration will be to correct the democratic process so that it allows more direct participation by citizens and residents. All other priorities are speculative without democratic support. Our proposal for such a correction can be read [here](#). It is important to qualify this proposal by saying that it has been drafted by only a few members of the Committee to Elect Einstein. As such, it is a plan for creating a directly-democratic system of governing that has not been drafted democratically; therefore, we look forward to debating and revising our plan with the participation of those who will maintain it, being the citizens and residents of Oakland.

Contingent on the creation of a more directly-democratic political system will be more employment opportunity and income equality for Oakland residents; greater accountability for law enforcement officials, public officials, and all those in the private sector who possess the means to cause harm; the creation of the Public Bank of Oakland, which will keep a much larger portion of revenue and income generated in this City from being appropriated by extra-national corporations and banks whose priorities are opposed to the well-being of Oakland residents; and the creation of an [Oakland Debtors' Union](#) to organize and amass the power of individuals in negotiation with financial giants.

3. Qualifications -- Please give a brief summary of your background and qualifications for the office of City. If you are a current City Government elected official, what issues can you point to in your time as an elected official that have had a positive impact?

Einstein's chief qualification is his uncorrupted perspective of Oakland politics. At close-quarters he has observed the trampling of the rights of peaceful protesters, racial profiling, unlawful evictions, attempts by Oakland's government to create an Orwellian apparatus for surveillance, greedy resistance to making much-needed changes to income distribution, the predation of public goods through privatization, the habitual disrespect shown by the Oakland City Council and the Mayor to the righteous petitions of Oakland residents, and the far-from-equal enforcement of laws. This perspective allows him to see very clearly what needs to change in Oakland, and his qualification for the Office of Mayor will be proved by the popular affirmation of his vision.

4. Local groups -- Are you affiliated with any of the active Oakland groups? Such as TOLA, Make Oakland Better Now, Block by Block, Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club, GO Public Schools, OCO, or any other. Describe your involvement and why you feel this group is worthy of your support.

Einstein is an active participant in Occupy Oakland, the Oakland Privacy Group, Strike Debt Bay Area, the Justice for Alan Blueford Coalition, and Berkeley Post Office Defenders.

5. Local activities -- Other than local politics, are you involved in any other Oakland based community activities that you would like to share with us? This can range from volunteering in your school to being in your church baseball league.

Einstein has participated in providing well-over ten thousand meals for those participating in events held by the groups listed in answer to question 4 along with many other social justice groups active in Oakland.

6. Budget -- If you were on council for the next budget in 2015 how would you act differently from the council members dealing with the budget in 2013? What do you think is the cause of the current budget crisis?

One of the easiest and best ways to bring expenditures in line with revenues is to reduce the massive outlays for law enforcement issued to five different departments, being the Oakland Police Dept., the Alameda County Sheriff's Dept., and the police departments of the Oakland Unified School District, the Oakland Housing Authority, and BART. The salaries for these officials are among the highest in the country as are payments for redress for abuses by them. Residents of Oakland are paying too much for competent law enforcement and should not be paying a dime for the harm caused by police officers. Paying more than one-third of the budget for the City to maintain law and order is too much. It impoverishes progressive initiatives that would create a thriving city of residents sharing values of their own volition.

7. Youth -- Describe the condition of youth in Oakland? What would your priorities for youth be for Oakland government and how would they get implemented and paid for?

Please see our answers to questions 1, 2, 8, and 9. In order for young people to make positive contributions to their communities, they must see that real power is within their grasp, and their role models must exemplify ethical behavior.

8. Police -- How do you think our community policing is going and what are the next steps? Describe the current relationship between the residents and the Oakland Police. Do you suggest any changes? Do you support Restorative Justice programs and how should the city be involved, if at all.

There is no community policing policy in Oakland at this time. Our city is occupied by military troops, masquerading as civilian police, ninety percent of whom live outside the City. An Einstein Administration would demand that police officers reside in the departments they patrol. In such an environment, officers would have to treat residents with respect, to show humane levels of restraint when apprehending *alleged* law-breakers, and to learn the steps of restorative justice.

9. Development Projects -- What are your thoughts and views about the West Oakland Army Base, The upper Broadway-Valdez Triangle, Oak to 9th and other projects?

One specific development project put forward by Einstein in his platform is the "One-Room Schoolhouse", in which educational facilities at all levels would be consolidated with child and senior care facilities to create economies of scale in providing services that have overlapping infrastructure requirements. If the population were not segregated by age when consuming library, media, cafeteria, paramedical, athletic, administrative, paratransit, and educational services, then the cross-fertilization that is the hallmark of a dynamic culture would be geometrically advanced. Seniors would be able to play a supportive role in childcare. High school students would have many more opportunities to assist elementary teachers. The chance for all residents to make a contribution to the solidarity and well-being of their communities would be placed at their feet.

In addition, a priority for planning all development projects will be to focus on the benefits of public ownership. In managing housing, worker-owned cooperatives, arts and recreational facilities, and parks, public administration can easily out-manuever the hackneyed criticisms of bureaucratic incompetence if those who suffer the effects of corruption are given unredacted powers of oversight.

10. Police Misconduct. What are your thoughts and how do you feel Oakland should deal with it? How would they get the Oakland Police past the current oversight under Judge Henderson?

If elected, Einstein has a plan for immediate implementation that will address police misconduct. It can be read [here](#).

11. Housing & Gentrification -- Increasing rents, dislocation, and gentrification have been in the news. What policies do you advocate to assure that Oakland tenants are protected and that Oakland remains an economically and racially diverse city?

A Public Bank of Oakland will offer low-interest loans to housing development and maintenance projects that are not intended to displace our City's residents. Under-water mortgage holders will be able to refinance with the PBoFO, and the City will pursue the tactic of eminent domain to reduce the principal on those mortgages to fair market value. Additionally, local businesses will have greater access to improvement and expansion loans desperately needed to compete with extra-national enterprises that pay little-to-nothing in local taxes.

12. Environment -- What do you think the Oakland City government should be doing about the environment?

Einstein has a specific proposal for improving Oakland's environment: "To curtail air pollution, the routes of diesel transport vehicles shall be confined to Interstate freeways (580, 880, 980) and Rte. 24, with allowance to access only the Port of Oakland and warehouses and industries, which shall be confined to an area bordered by the Port, freeway 880, San Francisco Bay, and the Oakland Airport. No diesel transport vehicles shall be allowed outside these areas or off these corridors while they are within the City's limits." Drayage enterprises must be given a reasonable amount of time to make changes in their equipment, similar to what was achieved by AC Transit. Additionally, Oakland's environment can benefit if we develop a trolley-car system modeled on those widely used in other countries.

Oakland must work with other cities to prevent the shipment of crude oil by rail through our communities. And the contract for the former Army base must be strengthened to insure that coal and other pollutants are not stored or processed on this site.

Storm water run-off is another serious environmental problem. This contaminated water must be treated before being dumped into the Bay.

A greater share of the costs for environmental improvement must be apportioned so that those who experience a greater share of the benefits of the degradation of Oakland's environment pay the most for its improvement, regardless of where they reside. Oakland must not engage in a race-to-the-bottom in pursuit of outside investment.

13. Satisfaction of Residents -- How do you think the average resident feels about city government? How would you rate the satisfaction level?

Einstein wouldn't be running if average residents weren't extremely fed-up with what "two-legged politicians" have been doing (and not doing) for many years down at City Hall. He knows that voters have almost given up on government being able to make any significant positive changes whatsoever -- just witness the record low turnout in this past June's election! Oakland needs "revolutionary change" -- as in making a brilliant, loving canine its next Mayor!

14. Accountability -- How do you propose making yourself accountable and accessible to the citizens of Oakland?

One of the planks in Einstein's platform addresses the problem of accountability in a very simple way. Penalties for crimes shall be apportioned according to wealth and access to power. Those holding privileged positions in society -- those who have benefited from educational and employment opportunities unavailable to others -- must be held to higher standards of compliance with the collective will; therefore, penalties for noncompliance must be greater for the fortunate in order to successfully deter misconduct. This principal must, of course, be applied to the chief executive authority in Oakland's City Government.

15. Do we need an Oakland Progressive Alliance akin to the one in Richmond, and if so, who should be members?

The Richmond Progressive Alliance has been able to achieve many wonderful things, despite having to go up against California's largest corporate monster, Chevron. They would be a great model for Oakland to follow -- except of course the Oakland Progressive Alliance will be twice as good if four-leggeds can also join, on the same basis as the two-leggeds! (However, of course, everyone will have to agree to certain basic progressive principles and general goals).

16. Governance -- What kind of relationship could you have with other office holders? Who do you see as a working majority on council and who can you work with?

Einstein understands that the most important principal for creating and maintaining working relationships is respect. This means, specifically, using the strategies of non-violent communication and empathic listening when debating differing points of view. Starting from the assumption that everyone in the City's Government strives to do her or his best will encourage the motivations of altruism.

17. Endorsements -- Who has endorsed you so far? Who do you expect to endorse you? Who do you endorse in the other City races? Include your #2 and 3 choices for your own race and note that this year the City races are Mayor, Council seats, School Board seats and City Auditor.

As our answer to question 1 -- concerning motivation -- expressed, Einstein strives to reify the will of all of Oakland's residents. Any deference that might be shown by voters to endorsing organizations, or to Einstein for candidates to any elective offices is at odds with this motivation.

18. Campaign Funding -- How much money do you currently have for this race? How much money do you plan to raise? Where will the money come from? Describe sources of financial contributions for your campaign that you would refuse to accept (if any).

The Committee to Elect Einstein has confined our campaign expenditures to making photocopies of our platform. This minimal expense is met by the members of the Committee.

19. Checks and balances -- How do you view current the relationship between the Council and Mayor? Any comments on the same question for the Auditor and City Attorney? Are there any changes they would propose to the city charter?

Einstein has addressed the need for changes in accountability, improved working relationships, and more direct democratic access to power in his answers to questions 2, 14, and 16.

20. Money in elections. -- Does Oakland need campaign finance reform? If so, what kind?

Oakland, along with the entire country, desperately needs campaign finance reform. In order for all citizens to have a chance at holding elective office, money cannot be a deciding factor; therefore, all candidates for public office must not use private funds. Candidates must depend only on equally distributed revenues of the City for funding their campaigns. To be a bit more specific, it will be acknowledged that candidates for the office of Mayor have greater funding requirements than those for positions on the City Council; therefore equal funding must be apportioned according to the size of the candidates' electorate. In addition, candidates for all elective offices must have equal access to publicly televised debates and self-promotion.

21. Anything Else? -- Is there anything else you would like us to know about you?

If you support Einstein's platform, then write his name in for Mayor of Oakland on your ballot, and demand that your vote be counted!

Yes or No questions (follow with an explanation if you want to add one)

-- Do you support the renewal of Measure Y?

No, Einstein's plan for vastly reducing crime means that we WON'T NEED more money for police -- in fact, we'll be able to significantly cut the police budget!

-- Do you support the minimum wage proposal?

No. Any changes to minimum wage requirements will not be effective in improving the opportunities for financial independence unless the resulting inflationary pressure on needed goods and services – such as housing, education, health care, transportation, and food – is addressed. Einstein sees the enactment of a maximum wage requirement to be one important tool for addressing this inflationary pressure, along with the creation of the Public Bank of Oakland and the Oakland Debtors' Union.

-- Are you in favor of a police commission?

More information is needed before answering this question.

-- Do you support Dan Kalb's proposal on oversight and transparency?

Mr. Kalb's Ethics Commission measure is limited in its application by calculations of political feasibility. Please see our answers to questions 1 and 14.

-- Are you in favor of receiving public complaints against police officers at the Civilian Police Review Board?

Yes, with the stipulation that details of the program must first be reviewed.

-- Would you vote for using eminent domain to abate foreclosure crisis?

Yes. The use of eminent domain law is an expedient strategy for protecting those enduring unreasonable principal and interest rate burdens, which are not in line with fair market value or prevailing interest. Oakland government should make haste to keep people in their homes who do not currently have the organizational resources and market-setting clout that major financial institutions – such as Wells Fargo, Bank of America, Citi Group, and US Bank – have used to recover from the Great Recession.

-- Do you support Ranked Choice Voting?

Yes.

-- Would you support Proportional Representation?

More information is needed before answering this question.

-- Do you support diverting people from prosecution if they participate in a restorative justice program?

Yes, with the stipulation that details of the program must first be reviewed.

-- Do you support Community Choice Aggregation?

Yes, CCA will help accelerate the shift away from polluting fossil fuels to 100% renewable electricity. It will also enable Oakland residents to hold PG&E to better standards of accountability as a **public** utility.

-- Would you vote to allow more grey water systems?

Yes, with the stipulation that details of the program must first be reviewed.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Greg Jan
Green Party of Alameda County
(Please reply to: GPAC-VoterGuide@yahooqroups.com by Saturday, August 23).