

OMAHA CITY COUNCIL – District 2 Part 1 of 2

Question	Tariq Al-Amin (Nonpartisan)	Date Filed	3/6/2013
Extra biographical	married, Spouse: Diana, #of children: 2,		
Contact Info	4:00pm, caller assigned on behalf of sub-district residents; 3/11/2012, 11:57am, left message with wife; 3/7/2013, 2:37pm, left phone message; 3/7/2013, 5:40pm, emailed questionnaire after leaving phone message; 3/10/2013, Noon, sent report of extending to March 14 deadline; 3/18/2013, 9:42am, email stretching deadline to 3/19. After Primary: 4/10, 5:47pm, left message, 4/12, 5:05pm, left message asking for different email address. 4/18, 12:27pm, left message. 4/18, 12:31 emailed questionnaire without attaching. 4/19, 1:07pm, left message asking if questionnaire had arrived. 4/20, 11:22 am, left message saying had phone appointment scheduled with opponent.		

OMAHA CITY COUNCIL – District 2 Part 2 of 2

Question	Ben Gray (Democrat)	Date Filed	3/6/2013
Contact Info	4:00pm, caller assigned on behalf of sub-district residents; 3/7/2013, 2:39pm left phone message; 3/7/2013, 5:39pm, emailed questionnaire; 3/7/2013, 6:39pm, emailed questionnaire after leaving phone message; 3/10/2013, Noon, sent report of extending to March 14 deadline; 3/11/2013, 11:59am, left phone message; 3/11/2013, 12:48pm, candidate left message saying couldn't access questionnaire; 3/12/2013, 12:45pm, left phone message; 3/12/2013, 12:50pm, emailed questionnaire; 3/12/2013, 12:51pm, explained use of email instead of website.; 3/14/2013, 5:17pm, reminder email asking for 3/14/13 deadline; 3/18/2013, 9:42am, email stretching deadline to 3/19; 3/18/2013, Morning, candidate called while caller was on the phone with another candidate, caller left message when called back. After Primary: 4/8/13, 6:34pm, left phone message; 4/12, 5:00pm, left message at office; 4/16, candidate returned call; 4/18, 11:18am, left message saying would send questionnaire. 4/18, 12:30pm, sent questionnaire not as attachment. 4/19, 2:07pm, candidate said to call at noon the next day. 4/20, noon, left message. 4/20, 4pm. ANSWERS RECEIVED from phone interview.		
01 Biographical	Journalist, consultant for journalists and those engaged in politics, besides being on the City Council.		
02 Motivation	We have to address the issues of unemployment In District 2 we have pockets of unemployment at 30-35%. It necessary to create business development like at 16th and Ames where we hope to put in 5 businesses that will generate employment for those who live cross the street.		
03 Qualifications	Knowledge of the job - have to be in it to understand how to get work done. Ability to work with various individuals and groups, like the Empowerment network, Omaha 360 Violence Prevention, North Omaha Neighborhood Alliance (an organization I created) and other groups, some well-known, and some not well-known. Willingness to take on tough issues.		
04 Sustainable Development	The government should take the lead in establishing green policy. Government and professional individuals know more than lay people. There should be educational opportunities for lay people to understand green policy better.		
05 City Resources	There are a variety of things that have to take that have to take place that in the end will reduce the tax burden. At the 30th and Ames intersection, before I was in office, there were people who congregated on that corner. There were 1100 police calls. By eliminating the availability of the grounds there, we saved tax since there have only been 5 police calls. The same is happening at 42nd and Ames because of closed property signs. The city continues to need revenue. The restaurant tax is paid by those who go out to eat - it's a great way to raise money and pay down the shortfall on the police and fire pension plans. We should include budgets for retirement plans for city employees, for civilians, police, and fire.		
06 Animals	There are way too many cats. We need to do a better job making sure the pets are licensed.		
07 Illegal Immigration	The city isn't involved in that. It's a state and federal issue. My personal opinion is there ought to be a path to citizenship for those who are already here.	11 Representative Government	For the most part, that ebbs and flows. With the current mayor there have been disagreements, but they've not been wild and crazy.
08 Eminent Domain	It kind of varies. For example the property at 16th and Ames to Locust was just a landfill. The owner wanted to sell it to the city for an unreasonable amount. The city wanted to put infrastructure in it so it can be built for businesses. We have to be careful about property rights of the individual. It shouldn't be taking from one business and giving it to another. There is a state law that allows for eminent domain for community betterment.		
09 Crime	Employ the people. Create opportunities for employment; provide training for those who need to be retrained. We need to do something about those who are no longer incarcerated. It's hard for them to get jobs, but it's cheaper to fix it at the front instead of the \$46,000/year it costs to keep them in jail.		
10 Jobs	We're engaged in the process. We've brought in WalMart which employs lots of people. Air Light Plastics has expanded creating 150 jobs. We should develop North Star Boys Club, the businesses at 16th and Ames, and begin an effort to expand the small businesses that exist.		
12 City Business Connection	No.	16 Family	My family has been supportive.
13 Homosexual Ordinance-Omaha	I don't think there's any such thing as special rights. We have a group of individuals that have similar circumstances. According to the 14th amendment - everyone has the right to life, liberty, pursuit of property. I created the ordinance. The issue is discrimination, discrimination against anybody is wrong. I'm opposed to repealing that ordinance.		
14 Governing documents	I have read the Constitution of the United States. I've read the Constitution of Nebraska. I don't like that they put in that affirmative action piece. Those documents guide how we operate as legislators.	15 Constituents' concerns	We created the North Omaha Neighborhood Alliance. They have an opportunity one/month to express concerns. I still attend neighborhood association meetings as well.
17 Personal/Political	Depends on our station in the society. If you're an African-American you bring to the table something different than my white or Asian counterparts. Prior to that I was in TV for 35 years, so I bring that to the table. Based on a result of experiences in that field, and being an African American. Different decisions require different sets of circumstances and knowledge.		
18 Political decisions	NO, it shouldn't be, because we were elected to uphold the Constitution. What we may feel about religion, while that's good in your personal life, it should not have a whole of lot bearing at how you arrive at decisions. The homosexual ordinance had nothing to do with the church, it's about due process. The churches are exempt from the legislation.		
19 DOMA	I don't think it's relevant for me on the city council; it's a state and federal issue. I want to make sure people are not discriminated against.		
20 Abortion/capital punishment	I'm opposed to capital punishment. I don't think we should kill people who kill people and tell them that killing is wrong.		
22 Anything else?	Nothing else - we've done a lot in these four years and intend to do a lot in the next four years.		
Extra biographical	incumbent, married, Spouse: Freddie J, www.BenGray2013.com		

See next page for actual questions asked.

OMAHA MAYOR and CITY COUNCIL Questions

Question Key	Actual Questions asked. “*”d” questions offered as minimums to answer
Date Filed	The date the candidate officially filed with the County election office.
Contact Info	Contact Information - ranging from the details of when we inputted the candidate's responses, to attempts to establish contact, to if we still need a volunteer caller, to if the candidate is unopposed and therefore not on the list to contact.
01 Biographical	*Please include biographical information, e.g. family members, church affiliation, employment, etc., you consider important for voters to know and/or reference your website.
02 Motivation	*What has motivated you to seek this office? Is there a key issue you hope to address?
03 Qualifications	*What three primary qualifications do you bring to this office?
04 Sustainable Development	* Discuss how the sustainable development presented in the UN Agenda 21 comprehensive plan can be a benefit or detriment to the citizens. What do you believe should be the government’s role in establishing green policy?
05 City Resources	*What specific plan do you have for making the best use of taxpayer dollars? For example, what priority would you put on zoning, business incentives, personnel management, etc. Should each year’s budget include funding for future retirements?
06 Animals	What are the hot button issues concerning animals/pets in the city?
07 Illegal Immigration	What are your convictions regarding illegal immigration? What role do you believe the city should play in dealing with this issue?
08 Eminent Domain	*Describe your thinking on eminent domain and private property rights.
09 Crime	What should the city do to decrease the consequences of gang violence and other crime?
10 Jobs	Even though the unemployment rate in Nebraska is nearly the lowest in the nation, the unemployment rate for some minorities is excessively high. How can the city help in job creation? What specific ideas do you have for jobs?
11 Representative Government	What do you recommend for efficient interplay of the responsibilities of the executive (mayor) and legislative (city council) branches of city government in serving the constituents each is elected to represent?
12 City Business Connection	Do you, a family member, or your employer have any business relationship serving the city? Please describe.
13 Homosexual Ordinance-Omaha	*If the people’s petition to rescind the ordinance giving special rights to homosexuals some day appears on the ballot, how will you vote? In your opinion, what should be required to qualify for special rights?
(These last questions we ask regardless of what office is being sought. You may not think these relate to your office, but how you respond to these controversial questions might help the voter know how you would respond to other controversies in office.)	
14 Governing documents	What do you see as the major governing documents for this position? Have you read them? What does it mean to “uphold the Constitution” in the position you seek?
15 Constituents’ concerns	*What plans do you have for remaining aware of your constituents’ concerns and desires?
16 Family	What role has your family played in your seeking this office? In holding this position, how do you foresee it affecting your family?
17 Personal/Political	To what degree should an office holder’s personal principles be reflected in political decision making? To whom/what will you go for counsel in decision making?
18 Political decisions	Is it appropriate to use the Bible or other religious writings in making political decisions? If so, what would you use? If not, why not?
19 DOMA	The Department of Justice has refused to uphold the Defense of Marriage Act. What is your personal view on this legal irregularity? What is your personal view on the Defense of Marriage Act?
20 Abortion/capital punishment	*What definition do you give for each of these terms: pro-life, pro-choice. Which is your view and to what level of conviction do you hold that view? Some say capital punishment is a pro-life issue. What is your perspective?
21 Past President	*What key considerations did you use in deciding how you voted for President in 2012?
22 Anything else?	Declare anything else you want voters to know about you.
Extra biographical	Biographical information from what candidates provided the Douglas County Election office and/or other web resources. Candidates are asked to email kathy@voterinformation.org if any information is inaccurate. When known, candidate's website is noted.