

Dorchester Reporter

"The News and Values Around the Neighborhood"

2021 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: BACKGROUND

1. What is your name, age, place of birth and present address?

Name: Brian Worrell

Age: 38 years old

Place of Birth: Boston, MA

Present Address: 42 Columbia Rd Dorchester, MA 02121

2. What is your present occupation? Also, please note any past employment that may be relevant to your candidacy.

I am a small business owner and currently the owner of ...

Previously, I was an assistant project manager at the

Also worked in various accounting departments after graduating from Northeastern.

3. Please detail your personal educational background and achievements.

METCO Alumni

Northeastern Alumni (B.A. in Accounting with a minor in Entrepreneurship)

Licensed Real Estate Broker

4. Please list some of your affiliations with non-profits, civic associations and political groups.

I have partnered and volunteered with several non-profits, civic associations in the past few years such as Kings of Kings; Erie/Ellington; TNT; River Street Association; Balfour Academy; and the Cape Verdean Association of Boston. I am also of the local chapter of the NAACP.

5. What in your experience to date will most help you to be an effective leader?

First, I would say that running my own business and having people depend on me for their livelihoods has prepared me well for this leadership role. Specifically, my business experience over the past few years has afforded me a unique opportunity to build skills such as effective communication, advocating for others, attention to detail, negotiating and good grasp of how city hall works. As you know, I have lived in Boston, specifically in District 4 my entire life. My family and I have not only experienced the many issues plaguing our community but have advocated for family, friends and others to find solutions to these issues. I would

say what would help me be the most effective leader is the love of my community. My passion to realize a significantly more positive community is my north star and I believe that every day I will approach my responsibilities as your counselor with the burning passion to empower the community.

6. What are the three accomplishments you're most proud of?

- Being a first-generation college graduate
- Starting my own business
- Helping many people of color be first time home buyers

7. Are you a member of a union?

No. But I do strongly support the unions.

8. Please list any endorsements to date.

Dr. Jean McGuire

Trevour Smith (Former D4 Candidate, Teacher)

Section 2: POLITICS & ELECTIONS

1. What is your party affiliation and how would you characterize your political ideology?

I am at my core a believer in the people, and I strongly support policies that empower the people in my community. Democrat.

2. Please name up to three (and at least one) of your political role models? Please feel free to explain your choices.

Shirley Chisholm

Tom Menino

Edward Brooke

3. Are you in favor of term limits for the seat you are seeking? If so, how many terms?

The decision of how long our elected officials serve should be left up to the voters. I would serve at their behest and would gladly oblige to what is the people's will.

4. What would you do to increase voter turnout in the city of Boston? Do you favor same-day voter registration or lowering the voting age to 16? Do you favor mail-in voting?

I would advocate for making all election days a holiday. My District has very low voter turnout. Only about ¼ of registered voters come out to vote in municipal elections. I favor same day voter registration. I also favor mail-in voting

because many people do not have the time to make it out to the polling locations. Sometimes the lines are very long, especially during the pandemic.

5. Do you think that Boston should adopt a rank-choice voting system in upcoming election cycles?

YES

Section 3: ISSUES & PRIORITIES

1. What is your top priority if elected?

I'm running because I love our community. I am passionate about the advancement of people, and I've been working towards the advancement of people for as long as I can remember. I also believe that our community has been undervalued, underinvested, and underserved and it is to no fault of our own. I believe in the value of our community and recognize that we can create a thriving, vibrant, safe, and affordable community. When you have the skillset to help in the advancement of the people, it is only right that you put it to use.

- My priority is helping the community fully recover from the covid-19 pandemic because our community has been the hardest hit in the city (e.g., health disparities, many job losses). Advocating for resources to help people get back on their feet. This will include supporting our local schools to make sure they have the tools they need to teach our children. Making sure healthcare workers are recognized for their sacrifices during this pandemic. Advocating for small business owners to have access to grants and loans so that they can continue to recover and create more job opportunities in our community.
- My second priority is urban talent and youth development (e.g., building up the youth talent through high-tech trainings, entrepreneurial grants, higher education scholarships so the next generation can start to fill up the many great career opportunities our Great Boston Metro has to offer including in finance, high-technology research and development, tourism, medicine, education, commercial fishing, food processing, printing and publishing, and government.
- My third priority is tackling the affordable housing crisis. Because of my deep experience in helping many families secure their housing needs, this will be top of mind for me every day and will find creative ways to help more constituents to be homeowners. Affordable housing is one issue that would be front and center during my time in office.

2. How will you approach the issue of gun violence in our communities?

We need to create a neighborhood task force that has trusted partners in each neighborhood to engage, create spaces where conflicts can be resolved and provide resources. We need to create more youth programs that create after school and summer jobs. Re-entry programs need to have clear pathways to job opportunities and stipends. We need to invest in universal pre-k, early childhood education, workforce development programs and create more sustainable jobs in the trades and jobs of the future. I would work with my colleagues to support agendas that rid our community of senseless gun violence.

3. Is there a specific city agency you see as in need of urgent reform? If so, please explain.

The moment holds urgency whether its environmental, economic, housing, healthcare and education there is no better time than now to advance our city in these areas. Through reform in many department(s) we can streamline processes that influence change in the issues that are important to all of us. As a city we can make more of an effort to communicate with our neighbors effectively, value our communities' input and create supports that walk us through processes.

4. What is your position on residency, i.e. requiring people hired by the municipal government to live in the city of Boston?

Yes, people who are hired by the municipal government should live in the city of Boston.

5. The city of Boston presently owns and manages the historic Strand Theater in Uphams Corner. How would you seek to program, market and utilize this asset?

The Strand Theatre has been a Staple in our community for many years. I remember going to the shows at The Strand. With the lack of Arts in our schools we should revitalize the theatre and introduce new programs for the youth. As I have made known, youth empowerment is top of mind for me. We will make sure that this returns to being a local square where we can nurture our youth's creative talents. Who knows, the next Mark Walberg or Edward Norton could be in Dorchester right now, we need to redress this theatre into a space for the development of these many potential talents. Also, our neighborhoods are rich with diverse cultures, I would want to make sure that the space is a place where all that diverse vitality is on display. I also think the city can manage the space well so it can help generate revenues for the city.

6. What is your position on vaccinations? Should students be required to be vaccinated for Covid-19 to attend school in Boston?

Mattapan has the lowest vaccination rate in the city of Boston. This could be due to the accessibility factor. I will make sure I advocate vigorously to make sure that there are more accessibility points for the community. I would also invest my time in helping to educate the community about the benefits of being vaccinated.

Whether students should be required is a tough question. Many parents have the right to make the best decision that is in the best interest of their children. Mandating vaccination may tend to take that decision away from parents. My focus would be on how children return to school safely, which would respect the will of the parents, students, and the community.

7. Do you favor a return to an elected School Committee? Please explain.

YES. I believe every parastatal needs a form of good governance. The school committee works for the people of the community. The school committee would be empowered to respond to the needs of the school, students, parents, and community.

8. Do you support the recent decision of the BPS and School Committee to alter the admission plan for the city's three exam schools?

Yes

9. Do you support the citywide ballot question that would hand new budgetary powers to the City Council?

Yes

10. The city of Boston is presently without a permanent police commissioner. What should the next mayor do to fill the position and what type of person should be selected to lead the BPD?

The mayor should find the best person for the position, someone that is well respected in the community. A leader that would work to empower his/her police force to always do the right thing; protect the members of the community and their properties. A leader that would not be tone deaf to the needs of the community. A leader that can see the potential in every member of the community, especially people that the police have more interactions with, like the black and brown community. We need a police commissioner that cares about us.

11. Do you support the redevelopment of City Hall and City Hall Plaza?

Yes.

12. What is your assessment of the Climate Ready Boston initiative conceived and executed to date by the Walsh administration? Is this initiative a sufficient response to prepare for the anticipated climate change in coming years and decades? What else might you do to build climate resiliency in the city of Boston?

More needs to be done on climate change on every front. I commend the folks who've dedicated many plenty of resources to the Climate Ready Boston Initiative. However, I would advocate that every dollar that is spent by the government in this city be spent to help reverse the damage to our planet. So, for example, I would be advocating that supplier of products and services to the city disclose their efforts in their business practices of how they intend to handle the climate change issues in their business practices. For one, we would learn about best practices. Also, we would be able to raise the awareness of this issue with our local business community. This is an issue that all hands need to be on

deck to resolve. from the local level to the federal level, we all need to work together. I will start there and then advocate for more education in our community on how every member of the community can play a role through our behaviors including recycling and using products that are better for our planet.

13. A millionaires tax is expected to be on the statewide ballot in 2022. How do you plan to vote?

I think everyone should pay their fair share of taxes. I don't support a tax code that favors the wealthy at the expense of the poor.

14. Should gig workers be considered company employees, rather than independent contractors?

YES, if a gig worker is an employee, then I wouldn't support a policy that wouldn't recognize that worker as an employee. On balance, I understand the needs of many small businesses to hire temporary workers.

15. A report commissioned by the Walsh administration found that just 1.2 percent of city contracts awarded between 2014-2018 were awarded to Black or Latino-owned businesses. What would you do to change that?

We are currently working with businesses to put them in position to go after not only city contracts but state contracts. We must continue to advocate and on a biannual basis check the progress that is happening towards City Contracts. We can unpack City contracts to increase the chances that businesses have to land a city contract. As a small business owner, I know firsthand the many different hats one must wear. In our community where the median income in some parts is less than \$30,000, starting a small business and sustaining one can be a real challenge. As City Councilor, I will empower our Main Streets to have dedicated office spaces to serve as incubators for small businesses. In this incubator space small businesses will be able to use office space, conference rooms, receive information of financing that is available to them, receive free business subscriptions, free websites, tax and legal services. The goal is to support policies to raise the current participation rates of Black or Latino-owned businesses. We would work hard to make this happen.

16. In 2018, the Walsh administration set a goal of creating 69,000 new units of housing in Boston by 2030. What is your assessment of this target — and what would your office do to balance growth with the concerns that many have about displacement in neighborhoods like Dorchester?

I have worked over 20 years in real estate to help families find their first rental and home. I believe we can reach the goal of creating 69,000 new units in Boston. It will take leadership in this area. I would love to see our City streamline the building process to bring more housing online a lot faster. Create tax incentives, grants and low interest loan programs for landlords to create affordable additional dwelling units. The city can build a variety of different housing on City owned lots. The AG's Neighborhood Renewal Division where abandoned properties are forced to be renovated to bring more housing.

As a lifelong Dorchester Resident who still has family members and long time friends in our community as your City Councilor I want to assure them that homes and assistance to either be homeowners and to rent will be there.

17. What is your assessment of the Walsh administration's overall performance? Please offer a letter grade or pass/fail as part of your answer.

What I can do is highlight areas where we have grown and where I currently see opportunities. Under Mayor Walsh we saw investments in education, increase in housing development and the fight against climate change. Including all demographics and communities in the economic benefits of these investments and the inclusiveness of the benefits are areas where we can grow.

18. What is your assessment of the acting Mayor Kim Janey's performance since taking office in March 2021? Please offer a letter grade or pass/fail as part of your answer.

I believe grading the current administration on a letter grade or on a pass/fail system is not constructive. What I can do is highlight areas where we have grown and where I currently see opportunities. I would encourage the mayor to bring more opportunities to our community and show people how to grab hold of those opportunities. I appreciate the PILOT programs setup by the mayor where the 28 Bus is fare free and the expansion of the mental health response calls. These types of programs will allow our community to better recover from the devastation caused by the pandemic. This is my focus!

19. Will you seek to expand or change the composition of the Zoning Board of Appeals? If so, how?

Zoning board is an important parastatal. I will advocate that there be equal representation on the zoning board.

20. When not on the campaign trail, how do you unwind?

Spend time with the family. Watch a movie with the kids, workout, play sports whether it is soccer, tennis or basketball. Learning new/old recipes with my mom or from the YouTube chefs. Pick up a good book or play a strategy game.

21. If you were not a candidate, who would you support in this election for either Mayor or City Council?

I would support anyone that shares my values of decency, integrity, and love of our community. Someone who has the ideas, shown that they have cared and has demonstrated that they can get things done. It is also important to elect someone who has economic equity through the proactive investment of our community and the development of urban talent.

Thank you for participating in the Dorchester Reporter questionnaire. Please send the completed document as a PDF or WordDoc to newseditor@dotnews.com by Fri. Aug. 8, 2021.