

# Candidate Questionnaire

April 5th, 2019

*Dear Candidates,*

*The Monroe County Black Democratic Caucus would like to thank you for running for office. Below you will find important information about our endorsement/support requirements, questions about your person, questions on your stances, and request for further position information.*

## **CANDIDATE INFORMATION**

**NAME:** Isabel Piedmont-Smith\_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_piedmontsmith4council@gmail.com\_\_\_\_\_

## **MAILING ADDRESS (EITHER HOME OR CAMPAIGN:**

\_\_\_PO Box 1163, Bloomington, IN 47402\_\_\_\_\_

**WEBSITE:** \_\_\_\_\_www.piedmontsmith.us\_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICE SOUGHT:** \_\_\_\_\_City Council, District 5 (Bloomington)\_\_\_\_\_

1. Please list all high school and post-high school education, with dates of attendance and degrees conferred. Also include any relevant training that would help you perform the office you seek, with the dates attended and certifications achieved.

- Bloomington High School South (1984-1988)

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- Oberlin College (1988-1992) – BA in History
  - Boston University (1993-94) – Master of Arts in Teaching (Social Studies Education)

2. Please detail your employment history (post-high school), including contact information for each employer.

I have had various part-time jobs since I graduated from high school over 30 years ago. The full-time jobs include:

- Undergraduate Secretary, 1992-93, Dept of Germanic Studies, IU-Bloomington
- Social Studies Teacher, Fall 1995, Bloomington High School South
- Graduate Secretary, 1996-98, Dept of French & Italian, IU-Bloomington
- Department Administrator, 1998-Present, Dept of French & Italian, IU-Bloomington

3. Why did you leave your last job?

I was promoted from Graduate Secretary to Department Administrator

4. Have you worked on any political campaigns for other candidates? If so, who did you support and when? What was your title within the campaign?

I have helped with many campaigns, starting with Dukakis for President in 1988. I was the campaign manager for Julie Roberts when she ran as a Green Party candidate for Monroe County Council in 2002. I was campaign manager for Julie Thomas when she ran for County Council in 2012 (she was subsequently caucused-in as County Commissioner). I was one of the field organizers for Shelli Yoder's congressional campaign in Bloomington in 2012 as well.

5. How have you demonstrated your support for the black community and how will you continue that support if elected?

I have been working for social justice all of my adult life, not specifically for the black community but for all members of society. I have gone to countless demonstrations, from the 1989 march against homelessness in Washington DC to the Black Lives Matter demonstrations in Bloomington the last few years. I have been a member of the local NAACP for over 10 years.

In spring 2018, when African Americans in the Bloomington community spoke out against the purchase of a Lenco armored vehicle by the Bloomington Police Department, I listened. I met with individuals from Black Lives Matter and stayed after a very short Council meeting one night to talk with protesters. It was a wake-up call of sorts that Bloomington, no matter how "enlightened" we think our city may be, is not immune to racism deeply baked into the power structure. I learned that black people in Bloomington experience racism daily, and that many saw the acquisition of the armored vehicle by the BPD as yet another tool of domination by the white

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majority. I was against the purchase of the Lenco Bearcat for these reasons. I know that the black community did not speak with one voice on the matter, and I listened to multiple voices and made up my mind.

11. What is your interpretation of race?

Race is largely a social construct. Although ostensibly tied to ethnicity and genetics, the whole idea of my being different from you because of the color of my skin is something society just made up. Unfortunately, judgements based on race, especially in a country like the US that was founded upon racist principles, are unescapable. We must work hard every day to overcome implicit biases and truly listen and understand each other, with the goal of equal respect for all.

12. How would you respond to someone who informs you that your position, stance, or opinion may be problematic?

I would listen and learn.