

## **Progressive Newton 2017 Municipal Candidates' Questionnaire**

**(Please submit answers to [ProgressiveNewt@gmail.com](mailto:ProgressiveNewt@gmail.com) by Friday, August 18; answers will be available to the public)**

**Respondent: Anping Shen, School Committee Candidate from Ward 3**

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS SPECIFICALLY AS POSSIBLE:

1. How will you approach collective bargaining with public unions and how will you weigh the value of well paid, skilled union labor against potential cost savings from outsourcing?

As a life-long educator and SEIU Local 509 public sector union member, I will approach collective bargaining with a deep appreciation and respect for public union members and labor, as well as with a thoughtful perspective for concerned stakeholders of the public education system.

2. What value do you place on increasing affordable housing in Newton, and what concrete steps will you take to expand affordable housing?

Based on my experience as the head of a young, low-income family 20 years ago, trying to settle in Newton, I am deeply supportive of efforts to increase affordable housing in Newton and will support any reasonable ordinances or community programs toward this end.

3. Do you support the welcoming city ordinance? What other steps will you take to make our city welcoming to all, regardless of race, class, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other discrete characteristics?

As my wife and I came from an Asian country and settled in Newton, receiving gracious community support from the very beginning, I strongly support the welcoming city ordinance. One of my priorities for School Committee is to build a strong connection between schools and families of different backgrounds and characteristics.

4. What concrete steps will you take to combat global climate change, increase renewable energy, and decrease energy consumption in Newton?

As the head of a house which owns a hybrid car (Toyota Prius) and solar panel for electricity usage, I am a passionate advocate of combating global climate.

5. What does Black Lives Matter mean to you?

As a member of a minority ethnic group which historically suffered legal, political, economic and cultural decimation, I sincerely embrace the BLM movement.

6. Would you support a zero-tolerance policy for discriminatory language by city employees?

Yes, absolutely.

7. What concrete steps will you take to address income inequality in Newton?

I will advocate for comprehensive support of low-income families and equal opportunity found in our public schools.

8. Under what circumstances would you support an override?

If clear evidence demonstrates that Newton public school educational quality will decrease without an override, I will strongly support it.

9. What steps would you take to assist seniors, millennials, and others who might be cost-burdened? HUD defines cost-burdened as paying more than 30% of their income for housing.<sup>2</sup>

My perspective is clearly stated in my response to Question 2. I will work together with all stakeholders to help those who need assistance in their housing challenges.

10. How would you improve access to transportation? What do you see as Newton's role in advocating for expanded transportation?

I haven't studied and deliberated on this issue yet, so I am willing to be open-minded and to be educated on how to improve our public transportation.

11. What do you believe the role is of local elected leaders in promoting progressive policies at the state and national level?

I believe local elected leaders should promote progressive policies at all levels as long as these policies will promote the overall well-being of the community.

12. Why are people poor?

This is determined by a host of circumstances including family/parent backgrounds, education attainment and the political and economic structures of the society.

YES/NO (Massachusetts state legislature bill numbers follow in parentheses, where applicable):

1. Do you support or oppose a \$15/hour minimum wage? (S1004 / H2365)

Yes, support.

2. Do you support or oppose paid family medical leave? (S1048 / H2172)

Yes, support.

3. Do you support or oppose the 2018 ballot question to place a 4% increased tax rate on taxable income over a million dollars per year?

Yes, support.

4. Do you support or oppose the 2018 ballot question to roll back protections for transgender individuals in public accommodations?

Oppose.

5. Do you support the safe communities act? (S1305 / H3269)

I support any meaningful legislation to enhance the safety of our communities.

6. Do you support the great neighborhoods bill? (S81)

I support any meaningful legislation to enhance the quality of our communities.

7. Do you believe Newton has met its obligation to provide affordable housing under MGL Chapter 40B?

I need more facts and education to answer this question.