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## **General Election 2017 City Council Candidate Questionnaire: A Voter Resource**

Interfaith Works sent out a questionnaire to candidates running in contested primary races for Council seats in the Cities of Lacey, Olympia and Tumwater. The questions reflect issues of current concern to Interfaith Works.

We believe that the candidate's responses are of great interest to our membership and our many community partners. Our objective is to provide a resource to voters to guide them in their election choices.

Candidate responses are published without editing. Interfaith Works does not endorse any candidate.

### **City of Olympia Council Member, Position No. 7 – Four Year Term General Election Candidates: Jim Cooper / Daniel (Danny) Marsh**

**1. Please state your plans to increase citizen access to government. For example, how will you include the voices of all of those in our communities – racial and ethnic minorities, the low-income, folks who live in shelters and on the street, youth, our elders and others – in planning for our community's future? What specific plans do you have to reach out to all people so that their concerns and hopes might be heard, and most importantly, be given equal weight when the city council on which you wish to serve makes decisions?**

Jim Cooper:

This remains the largest challenge for Olympia Government. I believe the system is designed to hold us back from really achieving equity and diversity in accessing government, whether as a direct service or to engage in policy conversations. I am committed to continuing to find new ways to engage especially with people of color and people in financial hardship, as I believe these are the largest gaps. Without full council making this a priority I am left to continually asking to reinvent, and working to be invited into conversations with these groups so I can meet them where they are in a safe space. Recently the mayor and I began talking about some sort of new style of community conversations (think town hall meets world café), so hopefully we are getting some traction.

Daniel (Danny) Marsh:

**This candidate did not submit responses**

**2. Have you ever been homeless? Known anyone who is homeless? How does that affect your decisions on services your communities could provide? Also regarding homelessness, please give us your thoughts on what a county-wide solution to homelessness would look like.**

Jim Cooper:

No, I have never been homeless but I have known many who are. I have worked in direct service taking homeless teens (primarily GLBTQ) on wilderness leadership adventures and on city council have continually worked to bring the conversation about homelessness more main stream, and to combat the criminalization policies we have on the books. I have much hope that someday government will lead with compassion, rather than liability. As for regional solutions, that would be the best and while great strides have been made recently and after 30+ years of trying that I believe it is time for an urban solution, and hopeful that the county will continue to make stride towards the positive. Olympia has recently taken a leadership role in this and will continue to pressure our neighbors to join us at the table, it is time we put our money where our mouth is (again) and create the system we need to serve our residents.

Daniel (Danny) Marsh:

**This candidate did not submit responses**

**3. Have you ever experienced discrimination based on your age, race, gender, immigrant status or economic standing? Do you know anyone who has experienced these types of discrimination? If so, how does that affect your decisions on city ordinances and policies in these areas?**

Jim Cooper:

I have some experience with discrimination around age, being a young leader but that is nothing comparable to what people of color experience daily or the fear our immigrant community is facing more recently. I am committed to every person in our city having the same experience, and we have a lot of work to do to get there. I will continue to lead with compassion first.

Daniel (Danny) Marsh:

**This candidate did not submit responses**

**4. What specific ideas do you have about law enforcement accountability? Do you support a citizen review board for your city's police department? Why or why not? Do you support the use of body cameras by city police officers? Why or why not?**

Jim Cooper:

I believe that the City Council is the elected citizen oversight, though understand our citizens demand more. I have proposed bringing back our independent police auditor AND implementing a Human Rights Commission that might do some work around community policing but also help us keep our eye on the ball around larger discrimination, equity and inclusion issues.

I am generally in support of body cameras as an accountability tool, though am not sure we have the correct ability to make the program work well through current state law. Also, it seems like there is a lot to be learned around privacy that may be hard to overcome. For those reasons, we should be cautious, but ready to act when the time is right, as we are now.

Daniel (Danny) Marsh:

**This candidate did not submit responses**

**5. Affordable housing is a concern in our communities. The predicted population growth in Thurston County will only increase the cost of housing. Do you think it is the responsibility of cities to ensure that housing is available for people across a range of economic circumstances? If so, what should be included in your city's planning?**

Jim Cooper:

This is a new line of business for the city and we are committed to this work. There is much work to do to make sure everyone who works in Olympia can live in Olympia, and those that can't afford a safe roof over their head have access to shelter and compassion. We are making great strides in this work and I am hopeful that in the coming year we will have more resources available and policies in place to make these goals a reality.

Daniel (Danny) Marsh:

**This candidate did not submit responses**

**6. In the past year, how many times have you taken public transportation, or traveled in some way other than a single-occupancy vehicle, to work, to city events, or to public meetings? What should cities do to help residents reduce their carbon footprint?**

Jim Cooper:

About a dozen, and not nearly enough. If we are to meet our climate change goals, then there is going to have to be a culture shift away from cars. We are making good strides in other areas, especially in securing renewable energy for all city facilities for a 20-year period, beginning in 2019. I look forward to this conversation as our city works to do its part to stop contributing to climate change. We are committed (unlike some!) to the Paris Accord and Mayors Compact that we signed!

Daniel (Danny) Marsh:

**This candidate did not submit responses**

**7. How will your city be affected by climate change/sea level rise? Does your city have a plan to address these effects, and what more can or should your city do to respond?**

Jim Cooper:

Olympia is in the process of designing that plan in conjunction with the Port of Olympia and LOTT Clean Water Alliance. We are already leaders in the nation in the sea level rise conversation. This plan will address how we will protect public and private infrastructure as we learn to cope with higher levels of sustained water in low lying areas. The implementation of this plan is likely to be quite costly, so we will need to have a community conversation about how to fund it.

Daniel (Danny) Marsh:

**This candidate did not submit responses**