

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: Carla B. Monteiro

Age: 38

Place of Birth: Dorchester, MA

Address: 480 Harvard Street, Dorchester, MA 02124

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

Present Occupation:

- Care Transition Specialist at Brigham and Women’s Hospital
- Emergency Psychiatric Clinical Social Worker at Boston Children’s Hospital

Past Employment:

- Clinical Social Work Intern in the Vivitrol Program and Case Manager in the Family Matters Program both at the Suffolk County House of Corrections
- Volunteer Big Sister at Big Sister Association of Greater Boston

3. Please detail your personal educational background and achievements.

Educational Background:

- Master of Social Work, Clinical Mental Health Concentration from Boston College, 2019
- Bachelors of Science Degree in Social Work from Bridgewater State University, 2017
- Associates of Science Degree in Human Services from Quincy College, 2015

Certificates and Licenses:

- Certified Clinical Trauma Professional, Evergreen Certification, 2021
- Licensed Certified Social Worker (LCSW), Massachusetts, 2020
- Substance Use Counseling Certificate, 2015

Awards:

- Boston’s Most Impactful Black Women in 2021, Get Konnected, Colette Phillips Communications Inc., & GK Fund, 2021

- Hero Among Us, Boston Celtics and The Mass State Lottery, 2021
- 40 Under 40 Award, Boston Business Journal, 2020
- Alfred J. Gomes Community Service Award, Bridgewater State University Afro-American Alumni Association 2020
- Future of Social Work Award, National Association of Social Workers-MA Chapter, 2019

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

Leadership Position(s) Held and Year(s):

- Delegate, NASW-MA Slate, 2019 - Present
- Founder and President, Cape Verdean Social Work Association, 2018 - Present
- Co-Chair, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Social Work Racial Justice Committee, 2020 - Present

Community/Civic/Religious/Professional Memberships:

- Mentor, Big Sister Boston
- Member, Greater Boston Association of Black Social Workers Inc
- Member, Criminal Justice Committee NASW-MA
- Member, Legislative Advocacy Committee NASW-MA
- Member, Greater Boston Association of Black Social Workers Inc
- Youth Advocate, Boys and Girls Club D
- Community Volunteer, Youth Services Opportunity Project

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

My background as a community advocate and my experience as a social worker. As a community advocate, I focus on a collaborative approach to leadership as demonstrated during the pandemic when I brought together elected officials, public institutions, and fellow community leaders to deliver PPE and hot food to elderly neighbors across the city. What has made me a successful social worker will make me an effective councilor for the whole city - listening, identifying needs, and connecting people to services in order to help them thrive.

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

Being a mother to my wonderful son is one of my happiest accomplishments in life. Certainly becoming a mother at a young age presented me with new and unique challenges but in overcoming those challenges, I found new strength and motivation within myself. Providing a more stable future for my son motivated me to take better care of myself, return to school, and become a homeowner.

Obtaining my Masters in Social Work was another major life milestone. Pursuing higher education 14 years after I received my G.E.D. was a challenging transition and doing so while working full time and caring for my son made it even more of a struggle. My Masters in Social Work (MSW) and becoming a Licensed Clinical

Social Worker (LCSW) allowed me to achieve the economic stability that I needed to care for my son and give back to my mother.

Third would have to be becoming a homeowner here in Dorchester. Achieving homeownership empowered me to provide stable housing for my son and family while opening new doors for greater economic security. Cultivating inter-generational wealth and breaking the cycle of poverty as a Black family in Boston are incredibly important life achievements to me.

7. Are you a member of a union?

Not presently but I was previously a member of NAGE, Local 298 from 2016 - 2018

8. Please list any endorsements to date.

- Sunrise Boston
- National Association of Social Workers, MA - PACE

Section 2: POLITICS & ELECTIONS

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

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Political ideology: I'm a working class Black woman with progressive political values.

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

Two of my recent political inspirations are Ayanna Pressley and Alexandria Ocasio Cortez. These two national leaders and amazing women inspire me for very similar reasons.

Ayanna Pressley and I come from very similar backgrounds of struggle and obstacles that we've had to overcome not only to pursue political office but also just to get by in the city of Boston. Congresswoman Pressley's quote that "those closest to the pain should be closest to the power" is one I keep close to the heart and motivates my run for office.

Alexandria Ocasio Cortez and I both come to politics without an explicitly political background. Congresswoman Ocasio Cortez's documentary "Bringing Down the House" was a motivational look at the courage required to run for office and reminds me of many of the challenges I face on the campaign trail.

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

I'm not opposed to term limits for the Boston City Council but this topic is also not one I have heard as a priority from many voters or one that I have prioritized in my policy platform. I would want to talk this over with more advocates first and hear from residents before coming out in favor or opposed.

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?

In order to increase voter turnout, political campaigns need to do greater outreach into Black and Brown communities and maintain relationships with these communities year round - not just around election cycles. In terms of democratic reform to increase voter turnout I support same-day voter registration, lowering the municipal voting age to 16, allowing non-citizen residents to vote in municipal elections, and implementing universal mail-in voting.

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?

Approaching issues from a holistic perspective and understanding the way they impact one another is what I have been educated and trained to do as a social worker. My platform can be summarized as a basic needs campaign. Without meeting the basic needs of every resident of Boston we can not achieve a more equitable and just future for our city. Within that platform, housing is among my first priorities and for me, that means ensuring every family is on a pathway to housing security rather than displacement. I believe we can accomplish this by redefining what affordable means in Boston by looking at the actual income of Boston neighborhood residents, building more affordable housing units because the current 13% mandate in the IDP does not go far enough, and increasing the fees levied on large developers from the Linkage Program from \$15/sq feet to \$24/sq feet and lowering the 100,000 foot threshold. All new developments should be required to be netzero and refurbishing our existing city owned buildings to be netzero must be of equal prioritization.

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

Community violence in Boston is incredibly personal for me. There are countless photos hanging on the walls of my home and in my photo albums where I am the only person in that photo still alive. I've lost friends and family members to community violence and still to this day wake up to the sounds of gunshots and the screech of getaway car tires - sometimes outside my own home.

When we talk about addressing violent crime in Boston, I will bring a holistic and collaborative approach to improving public safety. The solutions we employ must be centered in and led by communities like my own - where the impacts of violence are most concentrated.

This includes reallocating responsibilities from BPD and using those funds to invest in social workers and nurses in every public school to address the root causes of violence and mental health needs.

Shifts such as this one will allow BPD to focus on what they are supposed to focus on - getting guns off our streets and keeping our communities safe.

With a greater emphasis on developing community relationships and fostering trust by preventing, intervening, and solving violent crime, we will achieve greater public safety. It's long overdue that our city government place a clear emphasis on accountability and transparency, especially with regards to public safety.

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

I believe that the BPDA itself has lost the confidence of Boston residents and we must thoughtfully do away with the agency. There are many hearings to be had and records to make public before abolishing the BPDA but in order for Bostonians to once again have faith in the equitable development of our city, we must move on from the BPDA. As a city government, we must and will achieve Affirmative Fair Housing by welcoming more resident voices in the decision-making process, publicizing hearings, and making deliberations, records, and decisions more transparent.

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

This is an interesting policy area that I would like to take more time to hear from residents and current municipal employees on before confirming a stance. A residency requirement sounds like a good idea because of the need for employment in Boston and it would keep those jobs within the city. However with our current housing crisis including the lack of affordable housing and barriers to homeownership, I would be concerned about this preventing us from hiring the best people or forcing current employees to make incredibly challenging choices.

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?

I'm very proud of the way the city used the Strand Theatre during the COVID-19 pandemic as a testing center. Innovative ideas such as this one that benefit the neighbors directly around the Strand must continue to be our priority. As development in Uphams Corner takes place and the city looks to expand it as an

Arts District, we must preserve the community involvement in the Strand. We have to recognize that the development that happens around the Strand impacts the theatre itself so ensuring that more small businesses as well as Black and Brown owned businesses fill new commercial spaces is essential. Over the history of the theatre it has been used as a sort of community center where kids can just drop by after school as a safe space or participate in organized programs related to the arts and theatre. The strand must continue to promote the vibrant history and culture of art in our city and put local artists, non-profits, and organizations on display.

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

Many BPS students are still not eligible to receive the vaccine and still may not be in the fall so what I would focus on is requiring masks in our public schools. For the safety of not only the students themselves but any vulnerable family members they may live with, it's important that we continue to educate and encourage people of all ages to get the vaccine - especially within communities of color. Regardless of mask mandates and vaccination rates, our public schools desperately needed improved ventilation systems prior to the pandemic and it's important that we maintain a focus on those improvements as well as ensuring our educators have enough supplies to keep themselves and our students safe.

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

I support a fully elected school committee complete with two seats for student members who are given full voting rights and a stipend. Student voice on the council for too long has gone undervalued and underappreciated, these young leaders deserve better and adding an additional seat for our student members will empower them to be even more vocal advocates for their needs. Overall, the appointed structure of the Boston school committee is archaic and anti-democratic. Our students, parents, educators, and community members deserve a school committee accountable directly to them.

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?

When the COVID change to exam schools was announced, I supported this change in the interim. In my opinion, the latest recommendation by the task force does not go far enough to ensure racial equity - something they acknowledged themselves. We must continue to look into and assess longer-term solutions as we take steps that bring us closer to equity.

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

Budgets are moral documents and the city council needs a more direct voice in the budgeting process which is why I do support this charter reform. Line-item budgetary changes by the council and participatory budgeting by Boston residents are incredibly important changes to ensure greater involvement in our city government and more direct democracy in our city.

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 next mayor should absolutely put a premium on getting the position filled and completing an extensive process to ensure the candidate is a strong fit. As we look at addressing public safety holistically and improving police-community relationships, this new commissioner and the next mail much place an emphasis on accountability and transparency. I believe the next commissioner should approach the job with compassion and be open to collaborating with other departments and community organizations to achieve balanced reform.

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

I am happy to see City Hall and City Hall Plaza being redeveloped. We should always strive to make our city government more open and welcoming. Despite the building being a historic piece of architecture, that does not mean that we can not improve on its current design and especially beautify the outside.

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?

Having a plan of this scale with support and buy-in from the Walsh administration and the city of Boston is a great start but as a coastal city and a nationwide leader, we need to be bolder. The Climate Ready Boston initiative was launched to help Boston plan for the impacts of climate change and build a resilient future. This precedent itself is flawed. We are presently living in the climate crisis where smog from wildfires across the continent can cast a shadow over our city and sea level rise can blot out important roadways.

By committing ourselves to a Boston Green New Deal we can institute and invest in a green job training and placement program that fosters more good paying, union jobs with a focus on bringing them to communities of color. These jobs can themselves combat heat zones by planting and tending to a stronger urban canopy where trees provide essential shade while cleaning the air in low-income communities. Whether it be public housing or public schools, our city-owned buildings contribute a great deal to pollution. We must make retrofitting these buildings a top priority in our climate plan and with all these developments we

must prioritize engaging and involving Black, Brown, and AAPI communities in this essential work.

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

I absolutely plan to vote yes on this ballot initiative and to use my seat on the council to promote and support the campaign in any way I can.

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

I do believe that gig workers should be considered company employees, rather than independent contractors and be afforded the same benefits and protections that employees in other fields are afforded.

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?

Given the long history of racism in the city of Boston, it should come as no surprise that the city missed its contracting goals when these goals were not being robustly monitored or publicly reported on. We must continue to empower and follow the lead of community organizations like the Black Economic Council (BECMA) who led the push for public reporting on these goals.

I know the capacity is out there from Black and Latino owned businesses. I'm a member of several community organizations that gather Black Boston business owners who are deserving of these city contracts. I support raising the goals, continuing the regular reporting, and both continuing and increasing the investments recently made to assist Boston's Black-owned business to navigate the application process and be eligible for these contracts.

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?

The city and our municipal government have many avenues by which we can pursue a Boston where everyone can afford to meet their housing goals - whether that be homeownership or renting. I believe the goal of 69,000 new units of housing by 2030 is a valuable starting point and that we need to continuously monitor and update this number as the need fluctuates. This will allow our city to have a better real time understanding of both need and production.

A few options to achieve this goal include directing the Department of Neighborhood Development to have greater jurisdiction over and instructions to

prioritize supporting cooperative property ownership models by both nonprofits and residents. By following the lead of successful community organizations like the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative we can adopt successful models of community land ownership such as Community Land Trusts (CLTs). CLTs can be used for housing, business, or community farming and are one of the few options to provide housing stability, food access, and small business development for generations to come. I also believe it is important to strengthen the rights of renters such as their right to purchase or refuse if their landlord wants to sell.

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.

Pass. The Walsh administration developed and began the implementation of many important projects related to addressing climate change, the housing crisis, ensuring safe and multi-modal streets, and much more. At the same time we must acknowledge the inequity of contracts going to Black and Latino owned businesses, the persistent gun violence, and the police commissioner debacle that Mayor Walsh left behind. The chief executive of a major city like Boston is not a small or an easy job and while there were shortcomings I would give the Walsh administration an overall passing grade.

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.

Pass. Mayor Janey has had to take on a lot in a very short stretch of time. Learning the job of chief executive is a massive undertaking in the best of times and with an ongoing public health pandemic, inequitable distribution of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission White and officer Rose scandals back to back, and a attempt to empower small businesses - especially Black and Latino owned businesses - coming out of a massive economic recession, these were certainly not the best of times. Judging any professional on such a short amount of time is a challenge and I think Mayor Janey has handled herself with grace and overall deserves a passing grade.

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

Absolutely, as mentioned in a previous answer, I believe it is time to thoughtfully phase out and replace the BPDA overall. I've stood before the zoning board myself and know firsthand how unhelpful, confusing, and biased these systems can feel. Just recently I won an adverse possession case against a developer and had it not been for the help and support of my neighbors as well as guidance from my legal team, the system would have crushed me. In place of the BPDA we need an independent public office of planning that is founded on the principles of transparency and accountability.

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

As you can imagine, everyday and all times feel like campaign trail time nowadays! To decompress I enjoy going for long walks, especially early in the morning, especially through Franklin Park. I've got a great community of women that I adore whom I do kickboxing with and have for years. Of course any time spent with family is time well spent and I learned a deep love of cooking and baking from my mother at a young age. Lastly to put the mind at ease I also enjoy reading and performing meditation.

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

I'm incredibly inspired to be a part of such an amazingly qualified class of women and men running for municipal office in 2021! While decisions here are challenging I have to shout out my sister in service, Julia Mejia, who I have had the opportunity to work with in the community assisting men and women who were returning from incarceration and providing resources to single mothers. I look forward to calling Councilor Mejia a colleague after our years of working together in the community.

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.