

Dorchester Reporter

“The News and Values Around the Neighborhood”

2023 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: BACKGROUND

1. What is your name, age, place of birth and present address?
Rosalind Wornum, Halifax, NS. 7 Bruce Street, 56 years-of-age
2. What is your present occupation? Also, please note any past employment that may be relevant to your candidacy.
I'm a Parent Enrollment Coordinator in Education. I serve on the Neighborhood Trauma Team first responder for 5 years. I'm the CEO and Founder of Women On the Rise Inc., an organization to help women and girls build self-confidence and restoration by educating them and developing their skills utilizing a model of self-awareness and self-empowerment with support as they transform and transition from trauma resulting from domestic violence and unforeseen life experiences.
3. Please detail your personal educational background and achievements.
East Boston High School Class of 1985
Mt. Saint Vincent University - Psychology, 1985 -1988
North East School of Broadcasting - Communications 1989
4. Please list some of your affiliations with non-profits, civic associations and political groups.
City Life Vida/Urbana
New England United for Justice
Right to the City
Boston Ministerial Alliance
5. What in your experience to date will most help you to be an effective leader?
I have been a community activist and community organizer for over 25 years. Serving in both capacities has helped to shape me and give me the experience to become a leader. I have led many meetings, community rallies, marches and protests to empower our community. This has all made me stronger, wiser, and given me growth and knowledge to achieve the ability to continue in the capacity needed to fulfill the leadership role as the City Councilor for District 3.
6. What are the three accomplishments you're most proud of?
I am most proud of my 4 daughters, 3 of which I have raised to become intelligent and successful ladies. My oldest graduated from Boston Latin Acaemy, then from UMass Amherst, then received her Master's Degree in marketing and communications from Emerson College. My 2nd daughter graduated from Boston Latin School then went to Salem State and graduated

on a 4-year scholarship to receive a Bachelor's in psychology. My 3rd daughter graduated from Arlington High School through the METCO Program and she is in her last semester at Norfolk State University in the Nursing Program. Last, but not least, my 4th daughter is a senior at The Neighborhood House Charter School in Dorchester. Overall education is a priority in my world and household, especially as a single mom raising four young women. I strive for success and seek that my daughters and all students are able to achieve their dreams.

I'm proud to be an advocate for accessible and affordable housing within our communities. I have sought to share information on this topic and other matters for over 20 years. While providing resources to the community, I'm proud to have had the opportunity to lead the mission to have my church that was closed for 10 years, saved from being demolished. To aid in that fight, it took planning and organizing to regain the church's status and ensure that the original congregants and the community have a voice with their needs heard. Although this is still a work in progress, it was fulfilling to see that after I filed the application, contacted the existing church members, and worked with the surround community residents, I was able to organize meetings and petitions to save the church. After filing the paperwork for this process, the Boston Landmarks Commission, the Jewish Synagogues Historical Property's board, and others supporting this effort came together to make this a success. I am proud to say that the church is now designated as a historical landmark with the strong backing and support of the community and the local residents.

7. Are you a member of a union?
No, I'm not currently a member of a union.
8. Please list any endorsements to date.
The community and pending endorsements.

Section 2: POLITICS & ELECTIONS

1. What is your party affiliation and how would you characterize your political ideology?
I'm a proud Democrat working for the betterment of the people. "When We Rise Together, We Win Forever."
2. Please name up to three (and at least one) of your political role models? Please feel free to explain your choices.
 - a. Mel King. I was very intrigued by the leadership and the morals of Mel King for all people in the city of Boston. He was a very inspiring activist and community organizer with a strong will to build up the foundation in the city of Boston.
 - b. Mayor Thomas Menino: He was a man who I admired as well because of the way he worked with everyone. He ensured that people were not excluded. I'm always grateful for him because my daughter was

selected for a Boston City Scholarship to UMass Amherst University under his leadership.

- c. Dr. Martin Luther King: He was a strong man that led the Civil Rights movement who advocated for our rights, educated the people, and sought to educate communities that all people should be free from disparities and treated fair and equal. Dr. King was a righteous leader.
3. Are you in favor of term limits for the seat you are seeking? If so, how many terms?
It has been my belief for elections, that voters have the power of term limits.
 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? Would you support combining municipal and state/federal elections into even numbered years to increase turnout in municipal elections?
I would go into the schools to provide information about the importance of voting to students. I would want students to know how they impact the community and the future. I want empower and encourage our youth to have open dialog about the candidates and the issues that matter the most to them on the ballot. If we promote more open communication with the provision of listening sessions to the community, then we can empower the community to feel more equipped and informed when they go to vote. I agree that same day registration should be allowed to give more flexibility. I agree with lowering the voting age of 16. I am in favor of and agree with mail-in voting. I also support combining the Municipal with State /Federal Elections.

Section 3: ISSUES & PRIORITIES

1. What is your top priority if elected?
Housing is one of my top priorities. I know what it's like to be homeless, my mother experienced homelessness.

Mental Health is a priority for me as well because a lot of the issues we face in our communities, especially around crime prevention, gun control, and other issues involve folks with underlying mental health components, which in some cases people are misdiagnosed or not getting the services they need. Mental health is also major factor effecting youth and adults within our community and we need to provide much needed resources of support for everyone.

Education is something that we cannot overlook. Education will always be a top priority as we look for ways to see that our school systems and educators ensure that every child receives a quality education that supports each student's academic, emotional, professional, and social growth.

Career Opportunities and jobs for All is also a priority because as we provide more support in this area we illuminate the needs in our community and help to fill the gaps.

Senior services and programs for seniors in addition access to quality healthcare for them. It would also be beneficial to implement senior drop-in centers in District 3.

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

As a Boston Neighborhood Trauma Team first responder, I have witnessed the trauma of many families and the communities during horrific loss. Community organizations, residents, and the police need to come together to collaborate on developing a solution with all hands-on deck approach to resolve this concern. This also means involving the families on both sides to hear their stories and needs. We also definitely need more police to be visible, walking in the communities daily.

We must also provide youth with more programs, activities in school, and consider bringing back essential programming such as home economics, wood shop, and more to teach essential life skills that our youth will need before graduation. It would also benefit them to have the opportunity to become apprentices to learn skills within trade businesses as an alternative to higher education to help supply them with job opportunities. This will definitely help to decrease the street violence. Please know that change won't happen overnight, but it's time to put a bigger plan in place to make our city safe.

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

Boston Public Schools are not an agency, but there is an urgency to reform and restructure them so that the students remain safe and get the education they need. We need to enforce the bullying policies, reassess those students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), reassure families that all services are being met or will be restructured so the child's needs are met, and of course we need more funding. We need more funding for therapists and counselors in the schools to support our children as they charter through life, personal, educational, professional, and social needs.

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

My position on residency of government employees, is that you should have a choice to live in the city with no restrictions. Being a resident living within the city of Boston, you are much more of an asset to the residents and the city you serve, because you will not have to commute to get to the community. You will be in the know if things are getting better or worse. There are some folks who cannot afford to live in Boston due to the high cost living, this is why we need to implement a plan to have affordable housing for all, especially those who work to serve the Commonwealth.

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

I'm in favor of an elected School Committee. The voters supported that on the ballot. We must have a committee comprised of different experiences so that we are held accountable to make the best decisions for our youth and families.

6. Boston doesn't have enough housing to meet the demand. Separately, the Wu administration wants to see a return of the city's population to 800,000. 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 and Mattapan?

I believe that if the Wu Administration is trying to increase our city population to 800,000, we must start with adequate zoning codes in the areas of Mattapan and Dorchester which would allow more 2 and 3 family homes for the residents and multigenerational families. If there are smaller apartment units, we must ensure they are affordable so that prevent displacement. I would also give support towards the community receiving higher income wages so that folks can afford the cost of rentals in our communities.

7. What is your position on rent control?

I support any way possible in order to stabilize the housing crises to decrease the rental costs. I'm in favor of the City Rental plan to the State, where everyone can win, even landlords can also stay afloat, without high rental increases. Where everyone can live comfortably in their homes and not be pushed of their community.

8. What is your position on the reforms the Wu administration is undertaking, aimed at the zoning code and the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA)?

Mayor Wu administration Reforms undertaking aimed, at the zoning code and BPDA, is something that must be done, but not solely separate but with others to implement the plan that also includes the community, so that the communities are not negatively affected by it.

9. What do you think are the lessons learned from the Covid pandemic, and what would you advocate to change in city health policy as a result of the lessons learned?

During the height of the pandemic, we came to appreciate our frontline workers and first responders more for all they do when they should never be taken for granted. The hard work they always do for our families and the communities of all people and the long hours they have to work should not go overlooked. When we were shut down from our regular daily activities this opened up our eyes and taught us how to see how quickly life can change in the twinkle of an eye. Some families were at a lost for a while, without meals for the kids, being out of school and not receiving t food in school, until there were monies from the state for food.

I would definitely make sure that there are more counseling options for everyone, quality healthcare services are accessible to all residents.

10. What is your assessment of the Wu administration's overall performance?

Please offer a letter grade or pass/fail as part of your answer.

I give Mayor Wu a B- on the overall performance.

11. The Red Line and several commuter rail lines run through Dorchester and Mattapan. How will you advocate for better service and conditions on public transit?

The Red Line has had issues for many years, it seems that the problems are not completely solved. I would have a team inspect and follow up on the issues then discuss them to share those findings with the state. This way we could come up with a way to provide better transportation service to our residents and our T operators.

12. What would you do to make Dorchester Avenue and Blue Hill Avenue better roadways?

I would have both streets paved, fix the numerous pot holes, and ensure that the traffic lights are working properly. There should also be short term parking for the businesses.

13. What are your plans to reorient our neighborhoods to center around pedestrians and bikers?

Our roadways should be accessible for every resident regardless of their mode of transportation. My plan to reorient our neighborhood to center around pedestrians and bikers, would be to address the high traffic areas and unsafe drivers. There should be appropriate signs for our residents, crosswalks, and consistent traffic lights for both pedestrians and cyclists.

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

I'm still on the community activist trail, serving the residents of our city, in whatever capacity that is needed. This work never ends when you are heavily involved in the community and you're compassionate for the people and their concerns. However, when I see an opportunity for downtime time, I like to assist at events, if time allows. I like to FaceTime my daughters and loved ones who live out of state. I also like to take quick trips and spend some time on the beach to reset.

Thank you for participating in the Dorchester Reporter questionnaire. Please send the completed document as a PDF or WordDoc to newseditor@dotnews.com by Friday, Aug. 18, 2023.