What is your name?
James Donaldson

1. For which position are you running?

Seattle City Council District 7

2. What do you know about the unmet basic human needs in the district you would represent?

Some of the basic human needs that are going unmet have to do with some of the homeless population, the need for additional housing and treatment. That is the most pressing issue at the moment.

3. What has afforded you the privilege and power to run for office, and how will it impact your role in this position?

After 30 years of being a small business owner, 40 years of community engagement and involvement, experienced my own political campaign before, sterling reputation, successful and integral background has brought me to a position in life where it is time for me to actually "roll up my sleeves" and get to work with the political landscape.

4. What experience do you have in listening to and amplifying community voices? In what ways do you base your policies and priorities on the needs of those who will be most impacted by them?

I served on the Magnolia Community Council for several years, and have lived in Magnolia for 40 years. I'm a "big picture" guy with an eye on the details at my feet.
5. The cost of health care increases every year. Recent federal policy changes have threatened the long-term sustainability of Medicaid — such as attempts to reduce funding or turn the program into a block grant — and have aimed to undermine the viability of private health insurance markets — such as eliminating the individual insurance mandate from the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or not defending the ACA in court. Given so many barriers being placed at the federal level, how would you work to improve health care access at the local level to ensure stronger and more vibrant communities?

Our health care system is a huge bureaucratic monster that has forgotten the "average Jane and John Doe". I would work closely with health care facilities and make sure they have adequate funding for safety, staffing and city/county support.

6. Federal policies over the last few years have created a climate of fear for immigrant and refugee communities across the country. Even Washington State, long a welcoming environment, is no stranger to these challenges, as the recent Department of Licensing scandal showed. This climate of fear impacts immigrants and refugees of all statuses, and new research shows this fear is driving immigrants away from health and human services programs they are legally eligible to participate in. What would you do to leverage local systems and resources to bring immigrant and refugee communities back out of the shadows?

Get ICE to back off of them. Educate our communities on who makes up these migrants and be as supportive as possible.

7. Over half Seattleites and over 40% of people in King County are renters. Currently in most of Washington State tenants can be forced to move with only 20 days’ notice and even within the city of Seattle, there is no guarantee that a landlord will renew a tenant's lease. [For
King County Candidates] As part of the King County Council, will you enact just cause protections to give tenants stability? [For Seattle Candidates] As part of Seattle City Council, will you expand just cause protections for renters with fixed term leases who are up for a lease renewal? [For both] What are your plans and strategies to protect renters?

I would modify the evictions notices to 30 days notice, and increasing urgent warnings at 21, 14, 7 and 5 days of eviction (to protect renters). No, I wouldn't mandate fixed term leases, landlords should be able to offer the units without mandates (to not unduly harm landlords).

8. In 2018, the consulting firm McKinsey and Company conducted an extensive analysis of the current crisis response and homeless housing programs in Seattle and King County. They found that our region dramatically under-invests in housing and other system-wide responses, while the numbers of people experiencing homelessness grows. They found that between 2014 and 2017, the number of households accessing homelessness services grew by an average 11 percent a year, while funding grew by an average 2.4 percent a year. The McKinsey analysis estimated an additional investment of between $360 and $410 million per year for at least ten years is required to make and maintain progress in solving homelessness. Such added resources would bring our community in line with sister cities and counties addressing homelessness and affordable housing crises. What are three specific revenue options (local, regional, and state) you would use to generate the necessary funds to fill the gap between current local, state, and federal dollars, and the housing and service system investments required to do the job for Seattle and King County residents experiencing homelessness?
Sales tax increase, percentage of tourist dollars spent on hotels, transportation and tickets.

9. Seattle and King County are in the midst of a child care crisis because child care is expensive and unaffordable for many working families. At the same time, some child care providers cannot afford to pay workers a living wage and stay in business. What ideas do you have for solutions?

Continue to explore childcare options utilizing neighborhood networks, the companies are going to be forced to raise their prices.

10. Survivors of gender-based violence frequently enter the criminal justice system due to their victimization, but criminal justice responses are woefully inadequate and problematic for most survivors for a variety of reasons, especially Black, indigenous, and other survivors of color, refugee and immigrant survivors; and gender non-conforming survivors. What specific solutions will you bring forward for addressing issues of gender-based violence in our city? What mechanisms would you employ to shift the structural oppression and racism, specifically in criminal justice institutions?

We need more health professional and law enforcement people of color to identify more closely with our ever growing communities of color. I am African American and my foundation offers scholarships to student of color who are going into the mental health fields of study.

11. Describe how you would represent your constituents to ensure there is a pathway to emergency food services for all who need it. What policies and investments would you support so that residents across Seattle and King County have equal access to adequate, culturally appropriate, healthy food?
Ensure that food banks are staffed and stocked with quality staff and healthy food choices. Delivery service for those who have traveling difficulties.

12. According to a 2017 FBI report, nationwide reports of hate crimes increased by 17% from 2016 to 2017; by 32% in Washington State, and 198% in Seattle. Within Washington State, 38% of reported hate crimes were in Seattle. The City Auditor analyzed data that reported hate crimes doubled from 2014 to 2016 and doubled again from 2016 to 2018. 54% of the crimes related to race/ethnicity and 32% sexual orientation. What are your ideas for responding to hate crime in our region without criminalizing communities of color?

As a person of color (African-American) I have dealt with hate crimes all of my life. Hate crimes should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

13. As a city, we have moved to district representation. However, the needs of our residents are not necessarily most efficiently and effectively addressed by district. Nonprofit services most often cross multiple districts and people who make use of the services interact with providers throughout the city. How will you work to represent both the needs of your district as well as Seattle as a whole?

I will treat Seattle as one giant constituent, and have concern for every part of our city.

14. Will you support an automatic annual inflation adjustment tied to the CPI-W for the City's human services contracts so providers can maintain current levels of service as costs of doing business increase?

Yes