

2SLGBTQIA+ Questionnaire for Waterloo Region Municipal Candidates

Name: Barbara Harrington

Email Address: barbaraharrington6322@gmail.com



Do you identify as a member of a 2SLGBTQIA+ community?

No

What role are you running for?

Ward 4 city councillor

What do you believe are the most critical issues for the local 2SLGBTQIA+ community? If elected, how would you work with the local community to address these issues?

Lack of publicity for Cambridge's minimal resources for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. I want to say that I struggled answering this questionnaire. I find that the 2SLGBTQIA+ community appears to stay within their own click or their subjects doesn't come up in community conversation often enough. Even though that I have friends and family that are part of the community, the struggles are something that isn't brought up often. I know that gender based violence is a huge issue. maybe my ignorance is that I have no issues with the community. I love everyone for whom they are. It doesn't bother me that you identify as something different than your physical gender. I feel open conversation and open public events for all ages along with education will make a difference. like myself, you will find many flaws in my words and wording. I need to reeducate myself from the 1980's acceptance to the modern days acceptance. Cambridge is a melting pot of religions, cultures and identities.

Have you ever participated in 2SLGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training?

To be 100 % honest, no I have not but I have two great teachers my niece and daughter. They both are members of the community and have taught me a lot. I still have a lot to learn, but I know that if I explain that I am an ally and I am still learning that everyone in the 2SLGBTQIA+ community is more than willing to guide you to understand what you didn't know. I would gladly attend Competency Training, I didn't know it existed, going back to the point that there are not enough publicized resources in Cambridge for the average citizen.

Systemic homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia are still prevalent in our community, resulting in significant socioeconomic disparities within 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. If elected, how will you combat homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia?

I am one person, you are asking a question that needs an answer from an entire community. How will I combat it... I have already as I am not phobic to any of these. How will I combat these phobias on a community level? it starts with education again of course. Acceptance is key for all both 2SLGBTQIA+ community members as well as non members. My niece was the voice for all! she stomped her feet, shook her fist and corrected everyone who said anything incorrectly or uneducated. Now that she is a bit older and wiser she has learned that a gentler approach is sometimes required. I have strayed a little off topic but the key point is give perks to the diverse employers or be less hidden provide a sign or an advertisement saying you are a diverse and equal opportunity employer. we you make a public list of such places etc.

If elected, how would you address the ongoing issues of homelessness and mental health, especially as they disproportionately affect members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community?

I would have the same approach as I would for many other citizens. the difference being the support network and wrap around serviced that are required for the two different groups. Homelessness is such a huge issue on itself and to divide it makes it even bigger. I know that judgement exists on all levels when it comes to housing (trust me indigenous and single mom and I have an autistic son...hello!) let start with helping with resources. then lets reach out to some 2SLGBTQIA+ folk who are home owners that may be willing to have a tiny home on their property, they could mentor someone to better independence. There are many ideas we just have to get the region on board to support our ideas

Do you agree with the statement that "trans rights are human rights, and must be protected as such?"

The first easy answer! YES! 100%! There is nothing more to say to this as it is FACT! I will defend and help protect anyone whose rights are violated not even at just a municipal level but at humanitarian level as well

What is one motion would you bring to council that you think will improve the lives of specifically queer people, racialized individuals and/or marginalized residents and why?

Bring something to the community for all ages. It will help involve Cambridge residents with the general community and maybe help with some of the ignorance within our city. We need more places to celebrate diversity in our community as well!

When thinking about our schools, do you agree that 2SLGBTQIA+ representation in books and lessons is critical at all grade levels? How would you support 2SLGBTQIA+ students in schools?

Yes, but it has to be done sensitively. Some children are being raised within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and will attend school. Children ask a question, it's how they develop. A kindergarten student may ask why one student has two dads or moms. The question needs to be answered. I do not believe in book censorship or banning but I do believe in age appropriateness. No 18+ books for a Grade 4 student, (you get what I mean) but with permission from a parent, the hard topic books could be shared so there could possibly be a family in need of education and understanding. What I am trying to say is that the books and resources should be at the ready as soon as they are requested or needed. a school is for education, not segregation.