

2SLGBTQIA+ Questionnaire for Waterloo Region Municipal Candidates

Name: Madelyn Steiss

Email Address: votesteiss@gmail.com



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

No

What role are you running for?

Councillor, Ward 3 Waterloo

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?

I have been staying up to date with SPECTRUM and other 2SLGBTQIA+ community members on social media in order to understand the needs of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. If elected, it will be important to support election of progressive candidates, progressive policies and increase supports and services for 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

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

I have not, but this is something I would be interested in and see as a need both if I am elected and in my current workplace and life. I am going to look into 2SLGBTQIA+ Cultural Competency Training and would appreciate any recommendations.

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 plan to ensure that I have strong communication channels between myself and all people within my Ward to ensure that their needs are being represented. I recognize I need to ensure I am reaching out to community leaders of marginalized groups including 2SLGBTQIA+ communities within my Ward about issues important to them to ensure I can represent these communities at Council in a way that they need.

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 was happy to attend the report of research findings of Project Willow held by the YWCA. They discussed how women and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community are often left out of shelters and services due to the high prevalence of violence against both women and 2SLGBTQIA+ members. This often results in people having to stay in unsafe housing situations because the abuse they face there is better than violence faced at shelters. This report shows a strong need for an increase of shelters and services specifically for women and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

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

I do agree that trans rights are human rights, and they must be protected. Everyone deserves the opportunity to live in a safe world. We must pay special attention to groups that are at risk of violence, abuse, insecure housing, to ensure that we are offering supports and services that meets their needs. Trans people are at a higher risk and therefore we must ensure that we are paying special attention to their needs in our community.

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?

I would like to ensure that we bring an intersectional approach to decisions made at council. I am willing to work with SPECTRUM, OK2BME, and other community organizations and leaders in an ongoing basis, and would appreciate any input.

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?

This is a great question pertaining to school board trustees. If I am elected as Councillor, I will support education of and decisions that increase inclusion of 2SLGBTQIA+ representation and supports for children who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+.