



## Questionnaire for Mayor Candidates 2023

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Candidate Name: jontae dunston

Date:07/30/2023

Position Sought:Mayor

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**Question #1 Why did you decide to run for office? And what do you see as the primary qualities and responsibilities of the Durham mayor?**

I jontae dunston felt That the citizens of Durham's voices was not being heard. My job as mayor is to maintain the corporation of Durham and residents, quality of life to guarantee all citizens are to be treated fair and equal. My job is to maintain safety and security. For Durham city's economy .

**Question #2 What do you see as the City Council's top 3 governing priorities over the next 4 years? And what specific policies or initiatives would you work to enact in order to address these priorities?**

I Jontae Dunston as Mayor would first direct our city council to work on. Getting our housing crisis together. Work on our security safety measures to end our gun crisis. Also, to bring job security and find industries that are willing to relocate to Durham to Rain More industry because of our growing population. That is what the direction that I will have to direct our city council and the governing body to go forward in. I would have to change the ordinance and certain regulations that have restrictions in Durham. Order to make sure that we do not fall into know blocks or no dead ends. We must reach out to the citizens for their data and information. Because they are the ones who lives on a day to day, life and instead of outsourcing our

resources to firms to come in, we have the best. Resources inside our community to do surveys with our own residents. That can have insight on what we need to bring forward to make our city a lot safer. And a lot better for affordable housing and fair housing for all races and creed.

**Question #3 In 2021 and 2022 North Carolina and the Durham area ranked within the top three in the country for net growth in people moving to the area. What's your plan to address the housing needs of the large influx of people coming to the city while trying to stem the number of long-term residents that are being pushed to the edges of the county or into neighboring counties?**

I've said this for a long time The problem we're having with our housing is that our landlords do not have regulation. We have what we call a moneygrab. Knowing that with the population growing. That the residents that we're here. We're based on fixed incomes based on working at Duke University local universities. And these were people who were paid once a month and the land was regulated and the housing was at a minimum. Where you saw the average rent no higher than 700 a month. Now we're looking at rent that is well beyond that and you want a person to make twice as much as their income order to qualify for rent. Now like I said again. t the more we build, the more we move to regulate. How we are developing too fast? Because when we develop too fast, we overdevelop. And sometimes you have people who like to move on. We need to know that these are people. We're going to be rooted into our community, and if we're going to build in our community, we need to give our citizens the options to have a fair chance. to becomes a homeowners instead of Renters. I suggest that all landlords must be certified in order to . Lease or rent properties inside of Durham this will also help establish a Revenue income for the city. Also I believe that we need to put accountability on our landlord to make sure that they are in the equal opportunity and fair housing that there will be no discrimination against voucher programs and any type of programs that gives rent assistance that you cannot deny. We also have to understand that eviction holds up by court's proceedings. And also, these evictions will also cause mental anguish. On our children cause children have to go through. Being evicted and uprooted. So therefore, we must make sure that the fluctuation of people we have inside our community and the housing crisis that we're having and the population boom does not get bigger than what we can control with our resources. Shrinking and our police department shrinking. We should need to put a stop to more development.

**Question #4 Do you support the full expansion of the H.E.A.R.T. program by 2026 to be fully staffed and offer 24/7 services city wide? Why or why not?** Yes reason why I support the hart team. It's because the hart teams resources can be used for good in our community. We also have to have our people trained to be able to handle these crises more education. Because this will help release stress and Burden on doctors trying to get people to check on mental patients. People with mental stress and people with mental illness have actually seen how the hart team actually works. To the advantage of the citizens but they must also have cooperation from the police department and we must let them work together and build a trust

and a team effort. I support the Hart team only with training and oversight that these are individuals that will go out in our community. That will help take the Burden and also be the comfort for those who are seeking help.

**Question #5 Gun violence is high on many voters' minds due to the uptick in mass shooting events and neighborhood shootings, both of their reverberating impacts in our communities, and the lack of will of North Carolina's General Assembly to adequately address the issue. Please state your understanding of the root causes of gun violence in Durham. What steps do you believe Durham City Council could take to help curb gun violence and its impacts?**

In order to fight gun violence, it takes the community's cooperation. It takes the citizen's vigilance too. Notified to stop because Majority of the gun violence that is happening inside our city is done by juveniles and . We can't keep buying ourselves out of this situation. Buying our cells out of the situation we're not helping situation from inside and not handle this. The way it needs to be handled by disarming these young people by volunteering our services. We can't keep turning to the federal government to loan us money. So we can straighten up our own cities because if we use the federal money. Then we Straightened out our problems, but if we. Have federal money, then they can come in and tell us how to change our laws. How to regulate what we need to do. And that takes away the freedoms and the rights of other citizens who are trying to live in peace who have earned their rights who have earned their second amendment to protect their families and their communities. We should not infringement on people's rights because of others who want to. To terrorize our community.

**Question #6 When tensions are high in a group of your colleagues, what are the values and practices that guide your interactions with others who have different ideas and stances than yours?**

As mayor also must be counselor I also must be the one of words of wisdom. And to allow my colleagues to know that we may have a different of opinions. We may not see Eye to Eye. But we must come to agreements. And we must come to decisions that are not a based on our personal feelings, but are based on the best interest of our citizens of Durham. We must understand that we are all human beings. And we all make mistakes, and we all make foolish decisions. But there's always that 1 decision. That makes us a great thinker, a great compromiser, a great poet. A great speaker, we must be dedicated to serve the citizens which comes first.

**Question #7 In the 2023-24 Durham city budget, \$10 million was allocated to revitalizing Hayti. In the past few decades, many revitalization efforts in rapidly growing cities have become the beginnings of gentrification of historically Black and Brown neighborhoods. How would you ensure that this does not happen in Hayti, and that Hayti's working class**

## **Black people and long-term residents will benefit from the revitalization efforts?**

Majority of the time that when gentrification happens is when people sign over their property to developers and landlords most of the time, the landlords are control of most of those properties inside those black and brown neighborhoods, Majority of those residents do not own those houses and do not own those properties. So when the developers come in, they buy them up from. The landlords or the properties are considered condemned. Because either the person who previously owned the house did not keep the taxes. They did not keep the property up, so therefore it fell into code violations, so a lot of these places were able to get bought up. And then that's when you had big development put up half a million dollar homes, and change the zoning map of what Durham is looking like. That's all I can really give you on that case.

**Question #8 Simplifying Codes for More Affordable Development (SCAD) has been a controversial proposed amendment put before City Council this year. There doesn't seem to be disagreement about the need to reform Durham's development codes (zoning, parking, etc.). The main points of contention seem to be how the codes should be amended, what the role and plan for community input is, and who gets to benefit the most from changed codes. The amending of codes will impact Durhamites' lives in significant ways. How will you ensure the amended development codes will guarantee meaningful community input in decisions about developments? What will you do to ensure that amended development codes will reduce the negative environmental impact of new developments?**

As mayor our first agenda should create a citizen's Zoning board so we can actually have the input of our local citizens. Our Zoning effects our citizens way of living will start to adjust streets, st. We are planning it for our city. Our citizens have a vital. Roll with their input and how we should plan Zone and Ordinance

**Question #9 Currently, 30 states and Washington, D.C., have raised their minimum wages above the national floor (\$7.25/hour). Meanwhile, North Carolina workers have been stuck with a wage floor of \$7.25 an hour since 2008 and a \$2.13 tipped hourly wage. As the cost of living continues to rise, these wages are not enough to afford basic necessities.**

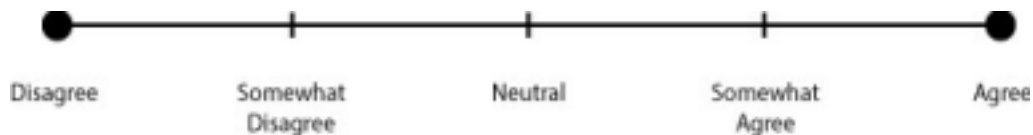
**On average in North Carolina, a household of two adults and two children needs to earn a \$33.25 hourly wage to afford the basics—more than four times the current minimum wage. Would you support a resolution stating that the state's minimum wage should be \$17 an hour and that tipped wages (\$2.13/hour) should be eliminated? Why or why not?**

Why I'm for a wage increase meant to 17 an hour. Because if we do not invite or lure new industries, new companies to durham , we need to find competitive wages that everyone can live on. That will not break their pockets in the long run. It will take 2 households for. The average income for the poverty level to go down, but if we do not raise our level of hourly wage.

our poverty level grows turned into the haves? And I have and have not.

**Question #10 This past year the Council adopted a budget that included funding for a Vision Zero Coordinator and more than \$40 million in projects to make walking and biking safer in Durham. However, there remain extensive gaps in the networks of well maintained sidewalks, safe street crossings, and protected bike lanes.**

**On the following scale, indicate how much you agree to support annual funding to complete city-wide networks of sidewalks, safe street crossings, and protected bike lanes and to bring sidewalk conditions and accessible curb ramps up to standard. Please explain your response. One thing I notice that we have a big Bike community, we have people who practice for the tour**



**Question #11 The Fiscal Year 2023-24 city budget includes funds to keep bus transportation free which benefits many of our working-class residents. What is your plan to continue lessening the transportation cost burdens on working class residents and increasing their access to means of moving around the city in a safe and timely manner?**

We must maintain a budget for our residents for free transportation. Knowing that what the cost and the price of rising with food and gas, a lot of our residents depend on the city bus to get back-and-forth to their jobs. I would like to see an adjustment Sunday. Route and partner up with local companies. That can offset our budget to help lower that cost. To keep their employees back-and-forth to work. We must keep the transportation free ordered to stabilize our economy. And put working class people with a sense of comfortable when knowing they have a way to work and a way back home.

**Question #12 There are state restrictions placed on the city's ability to raise property taxes on the wealthiest residents in order to increase the city's income. What are ways you'd work with council members to creatively increase the city's income? What would be your top priorities for the money to go towards if the city's income was increased?**

I believe that we need to revamp the property tax code. And we need to review what zoning and what planning. We need to come up with an order to make a fair. Taxable livable wage for the residents including property tax. I believe we need to raise the property tax on the landlord

**Question #13 Participatory Budgeting is one example of how elected officials can democratize the powers of their office. If you are elected, what is another example of how you would share your power and give more people in the community the ability to make decisions that directly impact them?**

As mayor we must have a citizen's review board and a office of accountability to make sure that all city and elected officials are running based on their office needs. We need to have a fair leadership that listens to all ideas. Not just some ideas in order to be a leader. We have to sacrifice are personal agendas. And come out with an agenda and make sure the citizens agenda is first not city council.

**Question #14 Like any other rapidly-growing city, Durham is facing complex issues with multiple stakeholders and no simple solutions. What is your plan for seeking input from community organizations on these issues and incorporating their constituency's perspectives in the difficult choices that you will have to make as mayor?**

As mayor the one problem that I saw as a citizen and talking to city council is that no 1 wants to work with the solutions that are brought to the table. Everyone wants to pay their way to a solution if we stop paying. way out and start figuring out how to stop the problem. Then the solutions will come easy for us to fix. We must listen to our residents, and we must take accountability for what their livelihood is.