

NOVEMBER 2019 ELECTIONS – RICHMOND CITY
League of Women Voters of the Richmond Metropolitan Area, Inc.
P.O. Box 25492
Richmond, VA 23260-5492
www.lwv-rva.org

The information in this Voter Guide was obtained by the League of Women Voters using www.Vote411.org.

The League of Women Voters of the Richmond Metropolitan Area obtained this information. Questions were formulated. Candidates were contacted by email and phone and they submitted their answers electronically in their own words. No editing was done by the League.

The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any candidate or political party. The League is nonpartisan. The League hopes this information is helpful to citizens as they prepare to vote on November 5, 2019.

Richmond City Clerk of Court

Duties - The duties of the office of Clerk of Court include court services, recorder of deeds, probate judge, custodian of court cases, public services, public safety, preservation of historic records, keeper of election ballots, and law library maintenance.

Term - 8 years

Salary - \$145,994 minimum from Virginia Compensation Board not including any increase for certification or optional city supplement

Edward Field Jewett



Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Email: Jewettforclerk@gmail.com

Age: 11/16/1961

Facebook page: Ed Jewett for Clerk of Court

Questions:

Q: *What is the most important responsibility of the Clerk of Court?*

A: The clerk serves as the administrative officer of the court, providing services to the public, judges, and attorneys, while compiling and maintaining the records of the court and the land records of the city.

Q: *What is the greatest challenge facing the office and how will you address it?*

A: Change is a constant. At the clerk's office our team continually plans for changes that are coming, both changes in how we use technology, and changes in the legal landscape. Over the last few years,

most all of our records and services have been made digital. We strive to make sure that these changes are prudent, economical, and beneficial to all users of the court system.

Q: *What will be your priorities during your term?*

A: We are currently in the process of digitizing many of the historic records of the court, for preservation and ease of access. We will continue on this path, as budgets allow. Ultimately, digital preservation saves not just the records, but time and money.

Richmond City Commonwealth's Attorney

Duties - The office of the Commonwealth's Attorney prosecutes violations of state law and local ordinances in district and circuit courts and provides legal advice to local government.

Term - 4 years - this is a special election to fill an unexpired term

Salary - \$144,745 minimum from Virginia Compensation Board and not including any optional City supplement

Colette McEachin



Party: Dem

Biographical Info:

Address: 400 N. 9th St. Richmond, VA 23219

Campaign Phone: (804) 551-2491

Web Site: <http://colette4rva@gmail.com>

Email: Colette.McEachin@richmondgov.com

Age: 12/21/1955

Twitter page: Colette McEachin

Facebook page: Colette McEachin

Questions:

Q: *What is the greatest challenge facing the Commonwealth's Attorney's office and how will you address it?*

A: The greatest challenge is balancing the safety of the people who live in, work in, or visit Richmond with the smart prosecution of non-violent offenders. Our challenge as prosecutors is to protect the community and provide a voice for victims in court, while also considering a pre-trial or post-trial disposition that will address the criminogenic factors that may have led to a particular crime in order to prevent recidivism.

Q: *What is your position on the use of diversion, alternative sentencing, and restorative justice?*

A: Our office has been at the forefront of using diversion (especially in relation to juvenile offenders) and alternatives to incarceration for a number of years. The problem is that there are many more defendants who need such programs than there are programs, bed-space and resources to accommodate the need.

Q: *What will be your priorities during your term?*

A: My goals are to 1) create a pre-charge referral program for simple possession of marijuana, so that people accused of that crime are diverted from the court, and if they successfully complete community service, no criminal charge is ever filed; 2) expand our existing alternative dockets to include a Dual Diagnosis (mental health and substance abuse) docket; and 3) to have our Office be more visible in the community.

Richmond City Council District 5

Duties - City Council creates and amends local laws, provides government policy and oversight, and approves the city budget and school budget. Nine Council members are elected from districts in nonpartisan elections. The Council elects a president from among its members and appoints a city clerk.

Term - 4 years - this is a special election to fill an unexpired term

Salary - \$25,000 (Council president \$27,000)

Nicholas DaSilva



Party: I

Biographical Info:

Address: 1601 Winder St, Richmond, VA 23220

Campaign Phone: (540) 848-3771

Web Site: <http://dasilvaforcouncil.com>

Email: nick@dasilvaforcouncil.com

Age: 2/18/1998

Twitter page: <https://twitter.com/DaSilvaRVA>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/DaSilvaForCouncil>

Second Email: dasilvaforcouncil@gmail.com

Questions:

Q: *What qualifications make you the best candidate for this office?*

A: I am a working-class candidate who personally lived through and seen the struggles of every day Richmonders. Richmond needs a city council member who will fight for the economic and social justice for all people. We need a city council member who will make Richmond a sanctuary against the repressive laws of State and Federal legislatures who seek to infringe upon human rights. I have organized and fought for that Richmond as a private citizen, now I want to bring that fight to city hall.

Q: *What are the greatest challenges facing your district and the City? How would you address these?*

A: The greatest challenge facing the district and Richmond generally is the economic disparity a quarter of our residents face daily. 25% of our population lives in poverty while we have vastly underfunded city services. This year, thousands of residents will be evicted from their homes and thousands more kicked out of public housing. We need to prioritize unheard voices by meeting people where they are and funding services through taxing corporations and developers.

Q: *How would you prioritize City spending to ensure adequate funding of services, including meeting the needs of the school system?*

A: The lack of funding for necessities of life is the most relevant issue for residents. When people spend hours trying to get to work, can't easily access healthy food, and worry about whether they will be evicted, they can't possibly live a happy and fulfilled life. We need to prioritize funding for public transportation, schools, and housing through changes in progressive taxation in our real estate taxes and by taxing corporations and developers who take advantage of our city for profit.

Q: *What can be done by the City to reduce gun violence and crime in general?*

A: I recently spoke to the mother of a man who died of gun violence in Richmond. We discussed how the majority of crimes happening in Richmond are economic crimes of opportunity. When people are pushed to desperation and crime because of a lack of housing, food, or other basic needs, we are failing that person. By creating and public schools, housing, and transportation that address peoples basic needs, we can strike at the root of crime and prevent it from happening.

Stephanie Lynch



Party: I

Biographical Info:

Address: 700 W 27th Richmond, Va 23225

Campaign Phone: (804) 441-2671

Web Site: <http://electstephanielynch.com>

Email: electstephanielynch@gmail.com

Age: 4/20/1987

Twitter page: twitter.com/stephanie4rva

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/electstephanielynch

Questions:

Q: *What qualifications make you the best candidate for this office?*

A: I am intimately familiar with the challenges faced by everyday residents in Richmond, and have experience addressing those challenges. I have years of experience as a social worker in Richmond directly helping people in difficult circumstances, and I similarly have years of experience developing policy solutions, advocating for funding and reforms on behalf of Richmond at the State Level. I also would be the first woman to ever represent the fifth, as well as the first south side resident.

Q: *What are the greatest challenges facing your district and the City? How would you address these?*

A: The biggest issue facing the 5th District is a lack of funding for the most critical functions our City offers to our residents. We need to be willing to think outside of the box on this issue. Instead of continuing to rely solely on increasing the tax burden of Richmond residents, we need to fight for Richmond to get its fair share out of the Virginia state budget through advocacy, and renegotiating the "Payment in lieu of taxes" paid by VCU and other tax exempt entities.

Q: *How would you prioritize City spending to ensure adequate funding of services, including meeting the needs of the school system?*

A: I have a "Back to Basics" approach. We need to prioritize properly funding schools, administration of our basic city services, and maintenance and investment in our aging infrastructure first. I have a decade of experience working with budgets and administrations in the General Assembly, so I know what tough

questions to ask, and how to prioritize critical investments first. Outside of funding, we have to find ways to engage with our communities first to meet their needs more effectively.

Q: *What can be done by the City to reduce gun violence and crime in general?*

A: I live just four block from Carter Jones Park, where Markiya Dickson was gunned down. As a social worker in these communities, I know that we need to take holistic action to prevent further gun violence. First, we need invest in our schools and economic development to engage our youth, second, we need to invest in a community policing model that is responsive in all neighborhoods, and third, we need to advocate in the General Assembly for common sense gun reforms to keep guns off the streets.

Jer'Mykeal D. McCoy

Party: I

No Response

Robin Denise Mines



Party: I

Biographical Info:

Address: 3708 McRAND STREET

Campaign Phone: (804) 304-5918

Email: robinminesforcouncil@gmail.com

Age: 7/23/1958

Twitter page: Rev. Robin D. Mines @RobinMines1

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfRobinMines>

Second Email: rdmspirit@yahoo.com

Questions:

Q: *What qualifications make you the best candidate for this office?*

A: I believe the voices of our citizens must be heard and their concerns must be addressed. Advocating for the citizens in my district is my primary goal. I will bring to the seat of City Council a spirit of cooperation that reflects the character, integrity, sound judgment, compassion and respect our citizens deserve. My quality of life, commitment to service and professional experiences have combined to prepare me to serve my district and the City with a clear understanding of what it means to

Q: *What are the greatest challenges facing your district and the City? How would you address these?*

A: One of the biggest challenges is high concentrations of poverty which have a huge impact on our children which affects the education process. I would work with HUD, RRHA and the Mayor proposing to diversify communities which will include a mixture of high-end homes as well as housing for low-income families and affordable units. I experienced this living environment when I resided in Shoreview, Minnesota. I would support these mixed-use developments by including retail, market-rate housing.

Q: *How would you prioritize City spending to ensure adequate funding of services, including meeting the needs of the school system?*

A: I will propose and support any legislation to maximize our education budget to ensure we have the best for our students in RPS and work diligently along with the school board to ensure funds are being

properly used and distributed to all neighborhoods. I would also support teacher salary increases to exceed the national average. I would also support teacher housing assistance/grants in order to attract strong teachers. I would also encourage congregations to support our schools.

Q: *What can be done by the City to reduce gun violence and crime in general?*

A: We have to create more opportunities for our youth. Recreation, job training programs, gun buyback programs, and better schools. We have got to address poverty with affordable housing other than project living. Rebuild trust between RPD and our communities. I would also support efforts to increase the number of police officers in Richmond.

H.W. "Chuck" Richardson

Party: I

No response

Graham J. Sturm



Party: I

Biographical Info:

Campaign Phone: (804) 212-8654

Web Site: <http://grahamrva5.com>

Email: grahamrva5@gmail.com

Age: 3/15/1987

Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/grahamrva5/?modal=admin_todo_tour

Questions:

Q: *What qualifications make you the best candidate for this office?*

A: My best qualification is that I am a teacher in Richmond Public Schools. I have taught high school in the city for eight years. The school system is the largest part of the budget and our aging schools need to be replaced. Not a single teacher serves on city council and me and my colleagues have first-hand knowledge of the challenges that face our students, staff, and facilities. It is time we get serious about education.

Q: *What are the greatest challenges facing your district and the City? How would you address these?*

A: Our greatest challenge is setting priorities. Too often Richmond pays for what it wants while what we need goes unaddressed. In my house we pay for what we need first and save for what we want. We pay our mortgage bill first, cell phone bill last, and save for vacations and granite countertops. You cannot put a vacation on your credit card, pay your cell phone bill, and let your mortgage lapse--yet we'd pay for a new coliseum, let potholes go unfixed, and let our schools continue to crumble.

Q: *How would you prioritize City spending to ensure adequate funding of services, including meeting the needs of the school system?*

A: First I would adopt a zero-based budgeting practice. You cannot adequately fund and address our needs without first justifying the money that is already being spent. Second, you prioritize your needs and your wants. We want a coliseum. We need new schools. We need trash services without a backlog

of garbage cans. We need roads repaired. You cannot kick the can down the road, at least not here in Richmond, it would just get stuck in one of our potholes!

Q: *What can be done by the City to reduce gun violence and crime in general?*

A: I was a student on campus at Virginia Tech on the day the worst school shooting in the history of our country unfolded. It is very important to me that we provide safe schools. They should all be outfitted with metal detectors, security staff, and resource officers. More broadly, reducing the amount of illegally owned guns on our streets means more community policing. I support state-wide efforts to decriminalize non-violent drug offenses and such efforts would drastically reduce crime.

Mamie L. Taylor



Party: I

Biographical Info:

Address: 104 Larne Avenue

Campaign Phone: (804) 420-5239

Web Site: <http://mamietaylor5th.com>

Email: mamietaylor.mt@gmail.com

Age: 9/20/1969

Twitter page: @MamieTforthe5th

Facebook page: Mamie Taylor For City Council

Second Email: mamietaylor.mt@gmail.com

Questions:

Q: *What qualifications make you the best candidate for this office?*

A: Experience/Transparent: I am a former RPS educator who became a School Board member for the 5th. I served a 4 year term, writing and revising policies (Equity and Kindergarten), creating positions (testing coordinators and parent/teacher liaisons) and suggesting the salary decompression that put more money in the pockets of our teachers. I also know how to work the city's budget to meet the needs of the constituency. I've lived in the district for 28 years, and my 3 children are RPS graduates.

Q: *What are the greatest challenges facing your district and the City? How would you address these?*

A: Government Spending and Schools. Underfunded, dilapidated and mold-infested facilities, curriculums not aligned with instruction, and children matriculating through K through 12 not prepared for work, military, or higher learning. Additionally when families make decisions about where to live, schools are a significant deciding factor. If we do not fund our schools, Richmond's appeal will continue to decline. I will assist with getting money to our schools as we invest in our children and future.

Q: *How would you prioritize City spending to ensure adequate funding of services, including meeting the needs of the school system?*

A: I will dedicate time meticulously to watching our city's spending trends, and when council forms the city's budget, I will make sure the community's needs are present and heard. I will further identify where potential surpluses lie in order to redirect those funds into escrow specifically for school capital improvement. For too long Richmond Public Schools have gone underfunded. I will also encourage long-term repairs to our road infrastructures in hopes of alleviating our Potholes concern.

Q: *What can be done by the City to reduce gun violence and crime in general?*

A: Economic Development and job training: Gun violence is a manifestation of a systemic problem. Too many Richmonders find themselves in areas of economic divestment that then results in people turning to alternative methods of gaining income, usually illegal. Guns on the streets are a product of this. On council I want to make a reinvestment in areas that have been benignly neglected by financing effective community-based programs working to impact lives of youth where gun violence is present.

Thad Williamson



Party: I

Biographical Info:

Address: 2316 Maplewood Ave.

Campaign Phone: (804) 241-0625

Web Site: <http://ThadForRva.com>

Email: thadforthefifth@gmail.com

Age: 1/27/1970

Twitter page: [Twitter.com/ThadWilliamson](https://twitter.com/ThadWilliamson)

Facebook page: facebook.com/ThadWilliamsonRVA

Second Email: thad.williamson@gmail.com

Questions:

Q: *What qualifications make you the best candidate for this office?*

A: I have a proven track record of getting things done in City Hall: While on leave from UR, I launched and served as the first director of the Office of Community Wealth Building which last year helped 600 people gain employment; later, while working part-time in the Mayor's Office, I led the establishment of the RVA Education Compact to promote more collaboration between city leaders on education, and led establishment of a new Performance Management unit to promote efficiency in city government.

Q: *What are the greatest challenges facing your district and the City? How would you address these?*

A: The challenges of improving public education and reducing poverty in the City of Richmond are deeply intertwined. They can be best addressed through a "two-generation" strategy that engages children and parents at the same time. This means investing in early childhood education, workforce development, and after-school programs; while also developing a comprehensive citywide housing plan, expanded public transportation, and supporting small business development and job creation for City residents

Q: *How would you prioritize City spending to ensure adequate funding of services, including meeting the needs of the school system?*

A: We need to work on four levels: First: invest in performance management efforts to improve the functioning, efficiency and performance of all city agencies, so that more work can get done with the available resources; Second, grow the tax base through economic development and intelligently planned growth; Third, seek greater support from the Commonwealth of Virginia and external grants. Fourth: prioritize funding for agencies and programs with demonstrated success in advancing key goals.

Q: *What can be done by the City to reduce gun violence and crime in general?*

A: 1. Provide quality schools that show all children we believe in them & their potential 2. Work with youth to teach conflict resolution skills 3. Increase the city's efforts to fight poverty & create pathways to economic security 4. Look at law enforcement practices top to bottom to get rid of racial bias and build greater trust in the community 5. Develop more, better quality affordable housing 6. Push the General Assembly to adopt sensible gun laws 7. Apply a racial equity

NOTE: Rep = Republican, Dem = Democratic, L= Libertarian, I = Independent

EMG 10/10/19