

- (1) Norfolk's General employees are not a stated priority of the current City Council. If you are elected would you make Norfolk General employees one of the stated priorities? (For example, Schools, Public Safety and Residents are the three stated priorities. The General employees would be happy to make the list, even if we are number four.)

All of the employees of the City of Norfolk are important and are a priority to council. As the next councilwoman, the general employees, their careers, salaries and benefits would be an important priority to me as well.

- (2) General employees would like to see general wage increases and steps administered equally across the board to all public employees. For example, if the teachers get a raise, other Public employees should also be given the same raise, and vice versa. Do you feel that salary and benefits should be administered on a level playing field, equally for all public employees (General employees, Public Safety and Teachers)?

As a former city employee, I know what it is like to have to depend on city council to determine if a wage increase will be approved in a budget. However, budget decisions are not decisions I take lightly and would have to look at the totality of the budget before making a commitment of that magnitude.

- (3) Norfolk retiree paid medical premiums are the lowest, by far, of all the seven cities in our area (see attached chart based on FY09 figures). If elected, would you support increasing the city-paid amount of retiree medical premiums to get them at least in the ballpark of the other seven cities in our market?

Again, I would have to look at the budget in its totality before making a decision of that magnitude.

- (4) Norfolk retirees do not get automatic cost of living raises, as do the retirees that are in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Increases for retirees are ad hoc, and have not kept up with counterparts in other cities, allowing pensions to diminish (see attached chart prepared by Norfolk's Human Resources and Finance departments and presented to our current City Council in August of 2008). If elected, would you commit to giving Norfolk retirees ad hoc increases that are comparable to what is given by VRS?

That is not a commitment that I am willing to make without looking at all the circumstances that surround the budget.

(5) The City of Norfolk's employee union, Coalition Of Public Employees (COPE), Local 04-200 was chartered in October of 2008. Its parent organization is the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE). Attached are our Vision, Mission, Motto and Goals. The City of Norfolk currently does not recognize our union, while they do recognize the unions of the teachers, police and firefighters. Do you feel the Norfolk General employees should have the same right to belong to a union (as outlined in the Right to Work law) and be recognized by the City as well as the other public employee unions?

I would have to look carefully at the laws that govern the Commonwealth of Virginia before determining whether or not I would be willing to make a blanket commitment of support.

(6) If elected to Norfolk's City Council, would you commit to putting people above new projects? Employees are asked to tighten our belts, do more with less, sacrifice because we are in tough times. Yet, we see millions and millions of new spending on nice-to-haves, not needs or the fulfillment of contracts. While we are proud of Norfolk's growth, it should not be at the expense of the employees that make it all work. If you are elected to Norfolk City Council, will you commit to not growing the City with new, expensive projects, unless you can keep a commitment to employees to not let their wages lose purchasing power and their lack of benefits cause them to have to work well past retirement age?

I believe that employees are a valuable asset of the city. I also believe that a balance has to be struck between people and projects. I would be committed to looking at all sides of the issues before making a decision.