

**CITIZENS FOR A FAIR FERNDALE  
CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE  
CITY COUNCIL  
2015**

Name: **Raylon Leaks-May**

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How long have you lived in Ferndale?  
**25 years**

Describe your community involvement.

**I am completing my third year of a four-year term on the Ferndale School Board. I have also been involved with Citizens for a Fair Ferndale, especially the Ferndale Good Neighbors Civility Pledge, as well as the Ferndale Education Foundation, Grant PTO Treasurer and Headstart Family and Policy Committees.**

How have the demographics of Ferndale changed in the last 20 years and what implication does this have for the City Council in the next 5 years?

**Between 2000 and 2010, Ferndale's population decreased, and the number of family households with children has shrunk, while adult households appear to be on the rise. That may mean a shift in the needs or desires of residents, to which the City must pay attention. To the extent that children and young people are critical to maintaining a healthy, balanced population, the City may consider developing plans to attract and retain new families with children to our community.**

What role do Boards and Commissions play in Ferndale's Government? How should members be recruited/screened?

**Boards and Commissions provide an opportunity for direct community participation in the functioning of our city government. Through these bodies, residents can advise Council regarding important policy decisions, more efficiently and transparently than if Council and City staff alone did all the work. On City Council, I will seek to broaden the way in which openings are announced to the public, including discussion at Council meetings, the City's quarterly newsletter, and online resources. Screening should include balancing professional qualifications with knowledge and within community.**

Why did you decide to run for City Council? What has prepared you to hold a City Council seat?

**I realized that I could bring a different experience and perspective to Council that is not currently represented. I am a mother and an African-American woman. And while I admire and respect our current council, I bring a voice that is not currently at the Council table. In addition, I am qualified by my leadership and governance experience, especially my recent role in the Ferndale School Strategic Planning.**

What is the most productive relationship between Council and the City Manager?

**Council and the City Manager must have a strong, collaborative relationship. Communication and mutual respect are essential.**

When there is disagreement on any issue among members of the City Council what is the responsibility of each individual Council member?

**Each Council member must be open to listening to one another and discuss difficult issues in a constructive fashion. Listening to another perspective may make a Council member think of an issue in a way they have never thought of it before. Opposing opinions are worthy of respect, and Council members should agree to disagree when consensus cannot be reached.**

Explain the type of development that you see as most beneficial to the Downtown area.

**Mixed use development that provides for a variety of retail, residential space, family style dining, and parking. I am especially interested in attracting retail that residents currently must leave the City to shop for. When our businesses thrive, our community thrives.**

What specific ideas do you have for reducing expenditures while maintaining city services?

**One simple measure would be, as City equipment is replaced over time in the normal course of business (for example, City vehicles and electronics and appliances in City buildings), they would be replaced with affordable energy efficient equipment. Energy reduction would result in lower operating costs.**

Please give your opinion of the MiLife Health & Wellness Center.

**I appreciate that the Center exists to provide preventative care at a lower cost to the City – no cost to the employees. I am interested to learn more about whether this impacts City employees' medical coverage for more serious illnesses not addressed by the Center.**