

**CFF Candidate Questionnaire
Mayor and City Council Candidates
November 2019 Election
(2 year Term)**

Name: Rolanda Kelley

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- **Describe your community involvement.**

I volunteer for the Ferndale Area Democrats, raising awareness about upcoming local elections and adding voters to the permanent AV (Absentee Voters) list to increase voter success statewide. I also volunteer for Ferndale Pride and this year ran the largest and most successful raffle fundraiser in Ferndale Pride's history, raising over \$3k for Pride's June event. I seek out and attend many community events and fundraisers for Affirmations. Last summer, I co-created a community weekly bike ride called Ferndale Bike Night, which was open to all Ferndale residents to participate in and enjoy a guided bike ride around Ferndale and the surrounding areas. I love looking for new ways to get involved within the community whether it be connecting with residents and listening to their concerns over coffee or attending local events and street festivals, there are no shortages on ways big and small to get involved with our amazing community here in Ferndale.

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

To me, there is no match for this community's diversity and compassion. It's a great place to live, work, play, love and call home. While we have an amazing foundation here, we cannot be complacent. We must work every day to continue to thrive, grow methodically and sustainably. For these reasons, I have decided to run for City Council. In my career, I am an established senior level manager at Costco Wholesale. I am a team builder and constantly work to bring everyone to the table in order to make informed collaborative decisions. I firmly believe that my strong business strategy, leadership, people skills and problem solving abilities will effectively translate into the role of a City Councilperson and has more than prepared me to successfully do so. My guiding principle to 'Listen, Learn, Lead', is one that has made me successful as an influencer both personally and professionally. It also expresses how I will support, understand and represent the voices of each Ferndale resident once elected to city council.

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

The most productive relationship between the two is one that is a partnership. This partnership benefits greatly from a council that sees the relationship between the two parties as a collective and collaborative team. Civility, effective communication, mutual respect and the ability to listen are key elements of building a strong and effective alliance.

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

In a healthy government, where elected officials are not afraid to raise questions or have concerns on behalf of their constituents, council members can and will disagree on various issues at times. Nevertheless, they can still function as a team if all members can agree that their shared goal is to make the best decision possible for the city and residents of Ferndale. It is important when the council may be in disagreement on an issue, that all members give their complete attention to the issue at hand in order to gain full understanding as to where each member stands, so the most informed solutions can be made.

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

Boards and commissions play an extremely crucial role in advising the council on ways to maintain and improve our community, in addition to engaging our citizens on the democratic process. They play a key role in the implementation and development of public policy. Serving on a board is an excellent way for citizens to become involved in the operations of local government and to contribute to the quality of life in Ferndale for themselves, their neighbors and for the city itself. Interested persons should be residents of at least a year, submit an application, be invited to the commission/board to answer any questions the board may have. This process should take place every other year.

- **How will you work to promote inclusion of populations that might feel excluded in this community?**

Both personally and professionally I thrive on my ability to be relatable and authentic while helping others feel and know that they are seen, heard and valued. I do so by listening and uncovering ways in which person(s) involved would best feel supported. Whenever available, I would help guide the person or group and introduce them to other like-minded individuals or populations with similar values and help them foster meaningful supportive connections within their community.

- **Describe the type of development that you see as most beneficial to Ferndale.**

I am passionate about creating a community center that benefits our residents and promotes inclusiveness and accessibility for all. One that has programs that engage senior citizens,

families, the LGBTQIA community and provides opportunities for people with disabilities so there will be something available for all who resides here. Our center would promote volunteer opportunities, provide culture and education, support special events, offer fitness and would be a gathering place to unify and bring people together.

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

Motion to limit paid focus groups from outside organizations and instead implement more community based groups, which will both promote volunteerism while engaging the best resource that the city of Ferndale has; our residents. Managing controllable expenses in order to reduce expenditures is the most effective way to maintain fiscal responsibility for the city's allocated budget.

- **Describe one program you would champion to help foster community.**

I would like to have monthly town hall type meetings, in 2 hour increments where residents can meet and connect with the people of our neighborhoods. One hour would be dedicated to discussing things going on in our community and getting resident feedback. This is something I am quite passionate about and would head up it's implementation immediately if I were to be elected.

- **Where do you see Ferndale in five years?**

I would like to see Ferndale remain the funky, vibrant, innovative and inclusive community that it is today. I see the vibe remaining distinctly unique and different from the neighboring city of Royal Oak and surrounding areas. I see a great community center and maximizing land use for green spaces and parks. Capital improvements by residents and businesses will continue to be made strengthening the overall infrastructure around our city.