

DES MOINES DEFENDER

The People's Paper

ELECT INDIRA SHEUMAKER, BRANDI WEBBER & JUSTYN LEWIS TO CITY COUNCIL!

If the candidates we endorse here win, the Des Moines City Council will be re-imagined as a diverse representation of the current political climate in this city. The council will be young, it will be radical, it will represent the poor, the unemployed, the housing insecure. The new council would give legitimate political power to the mass anti-police sentiment that exists in Des Moines. Residents should be able to look at their leaders and see people who share their perspectives and lived experiences. There are only three candidates worth voting for next week, Indira Sheumaker, Brandi Webber and Justyn Lewis.

Many factors informed our selection today, but condemning the current incumbents for their treacherous reign is chief among them. Connie Boesen, Bill Gray and Josh Mandelbaum have presided over the most opaque, racist, undemocratic and militarized period in the history of Des Moines government. Rewarding them with your vote is like supporting Dana Wingert's attendance at a Stop the Steal rally. Voting for any incumbent is telling City Manger Scott Sanders and his lackeys at the Des Moines Register, that the cities decidedly undemocratic approach to doing business is acceptable.



WARD I: SHEUMAKER OVER GRAY & COENEN

We endorse Indira Sheumaker as the logical choice in Ward I because she is the only candidate answering questions specifically and proposing real world solutions during this campaign. Her lived experience organizing and informing the community for the last year and a half in regards to the cities business more than qualifies her for council.

We like that Indira cares about houseless people. We like that she rides the bus. We like that we saw her on the streets all last Summer. We like that Sheumaker refuses to accept simple band aids to address systemic racism in our city. Her calls to defund the police are on point, historical and revolutionary.

Sheumaker is correct when she argues that

INDIRA CON'T

neighborhood associations do not represent the working people in Des Moines. Her proposed Ward I People's Council would drastically change community involvement in local politics.

By bringing representation directly to neighborhoods and implementing their ideas, outside the rigid bounds of the council, Sheumaker would effectively counter the landlord friendly council members currently occupying the chamber and deliver a semblance of democracy to constituents.

Indira represents a desperate voice in Des Moines that has been otherwise shutout via police brutality, disenfranchisement and a targeted media campaign. She offers serious solutions to immediate problems by speaking to systemic issues instead of viewing politics through an individual lens, a difference that separates her from opponents.

After listening to Bill Gray speak during this campaign it's readily obvious he doesn't know a single person in Des Moines that rents. His disconnection from the working class is evident in his stump speech, where Gray backs old and tired ideas that are representative of the status quo. Gray's eighth year on council was marked by his admission that he was too shy to speak publicly about a houseless man that froze to death outside a public library. The incumbent remains firmly centered and uncommitted in regards to meaningful change. We encourage Gray to retreat back to his neighborhood meetings and resume thinking the things he's not saying out loud.

Marcus Coenen is a Manchurian candidate for the establishment whose entry into the race is designed to split the Sheumaker vote. His sole contribution to the Des Moines community since 2017 was supervising the development of technology that would help the city repair cracks in bike trails. The Beaverdale Neighborhood Association is a miserable NIMBY group that Coenen should be ashamed to associate with.

AT-LARGE: JUSTYN LEWIS OVER CONNIE BOESEN

The election of Justyn Lewis would represent a dramatic change from the conservative real estate speculator currently holding the at-large seat. We endorse Lewis because of his platform, which includes calls for no more luxury developments in favor of \$600/month apartments, clean water initiatives and a firm understanding that food deserts are a reality. Lewis has repeated that it is the job of a councilman to engage in community feedback, even if negative, and legislate according to the will of the people he represents. This democratic approach to council duty would be a welcomed difference from the current mute and move on approach favored by the incumbents.

It is unfortunate that Connie Boesen and other monied candidates are given serious consideration in these races. Boesen sat silently throughout the most tumultuous era in city history pretending to be powerless as substitute for action. She has repeatedly emphasized the "need for preschools" throughout her decades long political career with no visible results.

Boesen was born into wealth, has never had a job and often speaks up at council meetings in favor of landlord families who did business with her parents in the 1920's.

We ask that Boesen return to brunch and discontinue her gentrification projects as she reaches retirement age.



WARD 3: BRANDI WEBBER OVER MANDELBAUM & MCANELLY

Josh Mandelbaum in his first term on the City Council consistently voted in favor of draconian measures aimed at silencing public dissent at government meetings. His voting record indicates implicit support for police brutality, chilling of speech and crackdowns on community food programs. Mandelbaum, a trust fund baby, will perhaps be best remembered for being rendered unable to speak when confronted by protesters on his front lawn during the Floyd Uprising in 2020. Josh's environmentalism and police reform extends to electric powered squad cars. That's not going to cut it anymore.

The answer to Mandelbaum's slacktivism is Brandi Webber in Ward 3. Webber brings a uniquely empathetic approach to the campaign due to her experience being an actual person that has seen poverty. Her prioritization of the housing and food insecure isn't just commendable, it's also electable. We have confidence her alliance with Sheumaker and Lewis on the council would lead to dramatic improvement in our community response to mental health crisis by diverting DMPD from duties they are not qualified for (which there are few).

Brandi's platform offers simple access to local government that has been exceedingly reclusive. She promises to meet with voters outside of the restrictive chamber hours not favorable to working parents.

After listening to Webber on the campaign she is clearly not a person of generational wealth like her opponent. She, like you and me, cannot afford the extra thousand to build a new deck in order to satisfy a Invest DSM requirement. Her candidacy represents a rare departure from the career politician with tens of thousands to spend on the campaign. We would rather see new ideas and someone who cares for the most powerless members of our society, instead of four more years of the same empty platitudes from Mandelbaum.



