

AFSCME 1624 Local Board Elections

2025 Voter Guide

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2025 Elections Overview

Candidates by Position

Listed in Alphabetical Order by Last Name

President	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ben Suddaby● Brydan Summers
First Vice-President	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jason Lopez● Cynthia Simons
Recording-Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ashlee Kraus● Cynthia Vasquez
Secretary-Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Whitney Holt● Kevin Ma
City Vice-President	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ramsey Bissex● Kellee Coleman● David Cruz● Jeremy Garza● Joel Manzo● Lisa Martinez-Guzman● Trish Niswander● Dane Williams
County Vice-President	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jack Chincanchan● Morgan Davis● Armando Martinez● Alice Navarro● Tonya Nixon● Raven Perttyman

2025 Timeline

- Thursday, September 25 at 6:00pm CT: Nominations accepted at the September General Meeting (Location: AFL-CIO 1006 Lavaca St., Austin, TX 78701)
- Sunday, September 28 at 11:59pm CT: Voter Guide submission deadline for candidates (via Google Form)
- Saturday, October 4 from 2:00-4:00pm CT: Online Candidate Forum (Zoom)*
- Tuesday, October 14 at 6:00pm CT: In-Person Candidate Forum (Location: AFL-CIO 1006 Lavaca St., Austin, TX 78701).* NOTE: food will not be provided.
- Wednesday, October 15, 2025 to Wednesday, October 29, 2025: Voting Period

Election Process

- Log-in credentials will be sent via email and mail by the week of October 13th. You can vote online or via telephone.
- Voting opens: 12:00pm CT on Wednesday, October 15, 2025
- Voting closes: 11:59pm CT on Wednesday, October 29, 2025

***Please notify the Election Committee if you require language or other accommodations for either candidate forum at elections1624@gmail.com.**

At-Large Candidates: President

**Ben
Suddaby**

he/him



Personal Statement

Solidarity is an action. For many years I have been a loud and strong supporter of my union and the workers that keep the City and County running. All year round, I can be found speaking up for workers at Council, Court, commissions, community organizations, rallies, pickets and strikes. Solidarity is our strength and showing up to support each other helps us build a stronger union. As the biggest union in Austin, I am dedicated to empowering our union members and uplifting their voices so that we grow in numbers as well as influence & visibility as strong leaders in our local labor movement.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

For almost 8 years I have attended every union meeting, rally, canvas, march and town hall. I travelled to represent AFSCME in Washington DC and spoke on Worker's Right's while supporting Congressman Greg Casar's Thirst Strike. I was also a delegate to AFSCME's International Convention in Los Angeles last year and used the opportunity to speak in support of resolutions protecting workers in Right to Work states, Climate Justice, and pro-labor legislative initiatives. I am a member of the Central Labor Council Executive Board and have served as an AFSCME delegate for years. I consider it an honor to be able to hear what other local unions need, bring it back to membership, and show up in solidarity -handing out water when necessary or stepping up to the podium when called upon.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

Compensation-Our union must advocate for worker pay at the start of the budget process at the City & County. We must make compensation an early priority to ensure we are not reduced to fighting over what is left after all other major budget decisions are made.

Working Conditions-Whether you work in the field, in-office, or remote, we know each workplace can present challenges. We must identify deficiencies in workplaces that need to be corrected and organize to push Council & Court to address these problems.

Member Support- Members need a transparent process that addresses their workplace concerns in a timely manner. Implementing a process with clear expectations for the member and their union representation will ensure matters are addressed consistently and fairly among membership.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I will work to build a stronger Union.

A union that is full of members who are equipped & empowered to fight for themselves, each other, and our community. A first step is making sure that every worker knows there is a union they can join, one that fights for them. We must teach members how to have organizing conversations, so that every worksite can have a greater union presence.

We must work to have a Board that is more accessible to members, works closely together, and visibly leads the fights that our membership has directed us to take on.

I commit to leading the advocacy for our members, solidarity work with other unions & the community. This way we will grow the base of support needed in order to overcome the challenges public employees are facing. Our solidarity is our strength!

At-Large Candidates: President

Brydan Summers

he/him



Personal Statement

Our union's success is personal to me; both my wife and I are AFSCME 1624 members, and we count on it for our family's stability and security. I know our union is important to you too, and it's a critical piece of the broader labor movement that we must protect. As president, my advocacy for the union has resulted in wins for workers, and I've represented you with humility and positivity. While on the Executive Board, I've worked to ensure the union has kept pace with our growth and that our operations have expanded and improved. I am AFSCME proud and honored to serve you.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

As president, I have worked tirelessly to improve our union. I was responsible for instituting on-line voting for our elections, setting our new standard. I led the initiative to develop a performance review for our Business Manager so that the Board now fulfills a vital responsibility and we have established priorities that our members care about. I formalized processes for members to give feedback on how we spend our money and decide demands we make to our employers. Members now have virtual meetings worthy of our union. While representing our union, I have successfully advocated for pay raises at the County Commissioners Court and City Council, resulting in a 5% pay raise at Travis County in 2024 and implementing our progressive cost of living proposal at the City in 2025.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

I hear in conversations and I've seen data that, above all, members expect the union to fight for their pay and benefits. Financial well-being for members and their families has been my north star. I'll maintain this focus to ensure the union is a value to you. The second biggest issue for members is job security and this takes many forms. It means adequate grievance protection. It means effective advocacy with our employers. It means safe and satisfactory working conditions. My relationship building, work ethic, and strategic decision making have achieved results and will in the future. The third issue is that members want a welcoming union that includes everyone. We have to value our diversity and our democracy, and that means making sure all members have a voice and feel safe to use it.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If elected to remain president, I'll have the same dedication to the priorities and values I've already discussed and will continue to deliver results. In addition, there are two other areas I will focus on. The first is expanding our capacity to organize, recruit, and develop members. Workers at their individual jobsites/departments have the best understanding of what needs to change and how we should do it. Our Organizing Committee, which I sponsored the creation of, is an opportunity for us to build this skill and empower our members. The second, is addressing the moment that we are in and fortifying our union to face attacks at the state and federal level. We must secure our finances, operations, and be prepared to mobilize to ensure our union will remain safe for all our members.

At-Large Candidates: First Vice-President

Jason Lopez

Personal Statement	No response received.
Describe your involvement in the union to date.	No response received.
Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.	No response received.
What do you hope to accomplish if elected?	No response received.

At-Large Candidates: First Vice-President

**Cynthia
Simons**

she/her



Personal Statement

In my role at the County, I support those navigating the reentry process, advocating for policies and programs that empower individuals to rebuild their lives and contribute meaningfully to society. My 10 years of work in advocacy, organizing and empowering working class individuals would lead me to joining and actively supporting our union, AFSCME 1624, as soon as I had the opportunity. Our jobs at the City of Austin and Travis County are essential for supporting a thriving community and we, as the workers, deserve advocacy that raises the voices of our entire workforce effectively.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

As a working mom of 3, I make sure to make time for my family as well as actively participate and support my union. I have been able to attend numerous General Meetings as well as Executive Board meetings. While regular members are not able to participate in Executive Board meetings, I have been able to understand the inner workings of our union and the most pressing issues it faces. I am also a member of the Holiday Party Committee and the County Compensation Work Group. I attend AFSCME rallies and townhalls to support policy fights such as the “Hands Off Medicaid” campaign and along with Texas AFL-CIO also put up a fight against the Texas Legislative redistricting. I was there, at the capitol with my union and daughter fighting for representation.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

Advocacy- A fair teleworking policy at the City is an issue since 2023 and we currently have County workers without an answer for FY 2026 Compensation. We must proactively tackle issues of compensation early in the budget process and not abandon fights like telework when members are still experiencing issues.

Communication- We must give updates to the membership that are meaningful and informative. When issues or questions remain unanswered, we must work to be able to explain why something has not moved and what we are doing about it.

Leadership Dev.- We must create the opportunities for union members to develop their leadership skills by creating speaking and advocacy opportunities in the union as well as the community.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If I am elected I hope to accomplish a codified teleworking policy for city workers that is fair and considers the working class families. We often overlook the needs of parents and single parents households when determining what is best and this is something that must be a variable that is recognized.

I hope to develop streamlined and consistent communication loops that allow members to be heard and see tangible steps to address their needs and concerns. I hope to have follow up channels that show progress and timelines to give a full and transparent picture of what is happening centering unity.

I hope to build advocacy workshops and empower all members to use their voice on issues that are important to them using non-traditional, person centered and family friendly mechanisms.

At-Large Candidates: Recording-Secretary

Ashlee Kraus

she/her



Personal Statement

I'm a proud third-generation union member. UAW grandpa, Teamster dad, and now AFSCME 1624. I believe solidarity is our strength. Our members may have different priorities, but we all want to provide for our families with dignity and respect. I'm proud of what we've won together, and I know the fight isn't over. Let's keep pushing for fairness, safety, and decency for all City and County employees. When the working class rises together, there's nothing we can't do.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

Delivered results as Recording Secretary, keeping members informed with clear minutes, agendas, and resolutions. Built the Social & Community Events Committees from scratch, creating spaces where members connect and organize. Fought for workers through the Tax Rate Election Campaign and represented us as a Delegate at the 2024 AFSCME Intl. and 2025 TX AFL-CIO Conventions. Took our union into the community, speaking at City Hall, leading APH Day of Action, and organizing events that brought members together. Recruited new members, backed labor-endorsed candidates, and pushed for accountability so our union stays strong and member-driven.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

1. Member Services – Many members report delays in getting support. I've worked with the Grievance Committee to develop new member services procedures. If reelected, I'll back their recommendations and push for policies that increase transparency, accountability, and fair representation.
2. Community Advocacy – Too few Austinites know city and county employees have a union. I've joined members at rallies and events to raise visibility and show the public how to support workers. I'll expand this outreach to strengthen AFSCME's presence.
3. Compensation – City employees secured wage increases, but County workers face inadequate adjustments. I'll work with leadership on fair pay, secure stipends for those unable to work remotely, and ensure equitable longevity and bilingual pay.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If reelected, I hope to build on the momentum we've created together strengthening our internal systems, deepening our community ties, and ensuring every City and County employee is treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. I will continue to advocate for clear and accountable member services, increased visibility for AFSCME 1624 within the broader Austin community, and a compensation strategy that reflects the true value of public service work. My goal is to help create a more responsive, inclusive, and effective union. One that not only defends our rights but also inspires collective action and pride in our shared purpose. Together, we can keep raising the bar for what's possible and set a stronger foundation for the future of our union.

At-Large Candidates: Recording-Secretary

**Cynthia
Vasquez**

she/her



Personal Statement

I'm running for Secretary because every member deserves to be heard and remembered — City and County, every shift, every department. What we say together should carry forward and guide our actions. I've been learning and taking steps to strengthen my understanding and find my place within our union, and I'm ready to contribute more. My goal is to keep our communication clear and connected so no one feels left out. As Secretary, I'll make sure our voices are on record and our union stays strong, welcoming, and ready to act together.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

My first step into the union was through advocating for remote work. That experience was eye-opening and I didn't immediately feel welcomed. Some of those early moments were awkward, and I stepped back to focus on learning my role and department. Even while stepping back, I stayed informed and connected. I see participation as circular, not linear — we all enter at different points and belonging grows over time. I'm ready to keep showing up, building stronger connections, and would appreciate a deeper conversation about welcoming and strengthening positive interactions for new members. Through other organizing work I've done, I've been able to build the skills this job requires, and that the union needs to be stronger and grow.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

Top issues for members are wages, benefits, safe workplaces, and freedom from discrimination. No one should struggle to cover rent or groceries while working full time. We need stronger fights for higher wages that reflect the value of our work. We also need better benefits—healthcare, pensions, and protections that give our families peace of mind. Safety on the job is non-negotiable, and every member deserves a workplace free from harassment and bias. As Secretary, my role is to keep these fights clear and connected—documenting decisions, making sure members’ voices are reflected in the record, and sharing timely updates so we can act together. Keeping everyone connected makes our union more powerful in every fight.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If I’m elected Secretary, what I want is for members to feel heard and connected. I want to make sure if you speak up, it’s written down and shared back so we can act on it. My goal is to keep communication simple and clear, across every shift and department, so no one feels left out. For me, in addition to creating our records and communications — it’s about building trust, keeping us accountable, and making our union more welcoming. When we all know what’s happening and where we stand, we can continue to move together!

At-Large Candidates: Secretary-Treasurer

Whitney Holt

she/her



Personal Statement

My union involvement started as a key organizer in the fight for telework in 2023. It was through this work that I saw just how much opportunity we have to mobilize and empower our workers, and how incredibly strong we are when we stand together. It was also through this that I realized how our union fights were lacking transparency, equity, and member led priorities. Every step I've taken as an organizer and Board member has centered these values and the wins I've gained show that progress is being made. We still have a long way to go, but my track record shows I'm not backing down!

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

Transparency- Achieved Board access to all union financial records for the first time; members now get monthly reports

Financial Management- Moved union for better protection; set up our first interest earning accounts; got the union's first credit card

Member Empowerment- Established annual Budget and COLA Townhalls

Pay Equity- Founded Workforce Housing Committee and found 80% of our workers struggle to afford housing, fought this with progressive COLA; co-founded County Compensation Work Group to find equitable solutions for wage gaps, compression, and retention

Telework- Organized protest, gained 6 Commissions endorsements, spoke at City Council; fought for in person pay stipend

Union Reform- Consulted Grievance Committee on data collection; established union staff performance metrics.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

1. We need to demand more financial transparency from the City and County so that we can make explicit proposals for where costs can be cut and reallocated to ensuring that ALL our workers can afford to make a life here and have the resources needed to do their job well.

2. We all have seen the sneaky ways bosses try to cut jobs by pushing workers to quit- leaving those who stay to do 2-3 jobs. The union needs to better organize to ensure this stops and our jobs are protected.

3. Workers should not have to tolerate bosses who make irresponsible decisions that lead to physical harm, are retaliatory, deny reasonable accommodations, or commit harassment. We need a unified grievance process so we can better track repeat or egregious offenders to ensure that EVERYONE is protected at their job.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I will continue reforming grievance processes to ensure all workers are protected and pushing within our union for improved "customer service." I will continue progressive COLA advocacy so our lowest paid workers get a living wage and we retain middle wage workers with fair and competitive salaries. I'll continue the fight to codify telework and in person stipends. As treasurer, I'll keep demanding financial transparency from the City, County, and our union and ensure our members have the data needed for informed advocacy. As the only current County Board member on the County Compensation Work Group, too often County workers are treated as an afterthought with our current board's priorities. I'm committed to empowering members to show up for all our union siblings across both employers.

At-Large Candidates: Secretary-Treasurer

**Kevin
Ma**



Personal Statement

I am born and raised in Austin as a 1st gen American. I spent my teens translating for my parents and worked two jobs while earning my BA of Econ at UT and was thrilled when the living wage passed. When I got my first full check, part of it paid bills for my parents. I grew up with the city and know the struggle to make a living as the city grows and how every dollar matters. I believe my years in budgets will allow me to excel in the secretary-treasurer position, so our union is on a solid financial footing and reflects our values. I want our union's money to be safe and work for our members.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

I started at the City as a “temp” employee for nearly eight years at a time when there was no attempt to treat those workers the same as everyone else. I have personally seen how the union has been able to create more equal conditions for temps whether it’s getting sick time or better benefits, but we aren’t where we need to be. I’ve also worked at five departments in nine different positions and everywhere I’ve been, I’ve talked with my coworkers about how we need to stand together so that we are being compensated and treated fairly. This has been my union involvement; talking about the union with others, showing them our wins, and making sure they know we are stronger together. I’m now ready to step into a role where my expertise can make an even bigger impact for my fellow members.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

Pay and benefits – Austin and Travis County are more expensive than ever, and workers must move further out to make ends meet. I would push for long-term increases and commitment to benefits, since the cost of living always increases.

Worker protections – The city continues to rearrange departments and move workers, both physically and organizationally, around with no regard. I would work towards a notice period and increased protection for those that have been affected.

Transparency – The economy and city are facing uncertain times, positions are left empty across the organization, and some departments are looking at consolidations and redundancies. I would push for opening channels of communication and dialogue so that those affected are not the last to find out about the changes.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I hope to plan and structure pay and benefits for the future. With the current economic outlook, future cost of living increases are uncertain and are more uncertain than ever. While the union was able to get some wins this year, I hope to plan for future increases and have more numbers to back up the proposals. I also hope to build in more protections for all workers so that they can continue working with job stability, dignity, and respect.

City of Austin Candidates: Vice-President

**Ramsey
Bissex**

he/him



Personal Statement

I'm Ramsey Bissex, proud AFSCME 1624 union member and Austinite! I joined Austin Fire to get a union job after being laid off multiple times in the private sector. In tech, we are too used to industry wide cutbacks designed to cut wages and leave the remaining workers with a worse job.

While the COA is not perfect, our union gave me something I never had before, a voice on the job. Our union's strength comes from standing together in solidarity, and speaking as one. When we are united, we have the power to defend our rights, improve our conditions, and build the workplace we deserve.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

I have been an active union member, engaged in committees and union activities. I've served on the Social Events Committee, Steward Feasibility Committee, Organizing Committee, and TRE Committee which I chair. Most importantly I'm helping to organize my coworkers by talking with them about their concerns on the job, ensuring their voices are heard and serving as a conduit for union information.

Earlier this year I stepped up to serve on the executive board in an interim capacity to fill a vacancy. In the last four months, I've used my technical expertise to compile survey data to produce reports, informing union decisions with member voices. As well as, advised on the development of our member portal.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

The top issues facing our members are the need for a fighting union, a responsive union, and fair pay and benefits. We need a union that will take every grievance seriously and fight to win, ensuring members know their rights are protected. We need a responsive union where every member who reaches out gets a timely response and feels heard. Finally, we must secure good pay and benefits so members can afford to work for the city and county we love. If elected, I will continue our work to push for stronger enforcement on grievances, build systems to improve member communication and advocacy, and organize around pay and benefits.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

Ensuring our members have a voice on the job is one of the most important duties of the board. If elected, I'm committed to continue building the AFSCME 1624 Organizing committee where members can identify issues in the workplace and fight against them. When we fight and win on workplace issues our members' issues are heard and acted on, thus recruiting new members and activating our members into the labor movement. Additionally, I'll work to ensure that we are collecting and acting on member feedback as our members have a lot to say! We should maintain what our members say is working and fix the things that aren't.

City of Austin Candidates: Vice-President

Kellee
Coleman

she/her



**Personal
Statement**

Kellee is a born and raised Austinite. She grew up in a labor family and worked for a period at ATU Local 1091. Kellee has been involved in different social justice movements her whole life and brings those lenses to her work on the board. She is a proud AFSCME member and is excited to continue serving others on the Board.

**Describe your
involvement in
the union to
date.**

I have regularly attended membership meetings, board meetings, and operations committee meetings, since I have been on the board, I helped with the Business Manager's job description and helped with the survey for their performance review. While I believe regular attendance at membership meetings is important, it is a privilege to be able to participate in Thursday evening meetings downtown. Many members are caring for children, elders, and are not at a desk 9-5 M-F, I think it is important to find other ways to meaningfully engage folks besides meetings or events. The ways I have most contributed to the union's work is by always being open to listening to my union siblings and to keeping my department and those I interact with abreast of current issues we are navigating and what I am learning.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

Top 3 issues are pay, benefits, job security, Our power is in our numbers, leveraging that power, and knowing when and how to yield it takes serious discernment. Working to make sure we hear from those who may not be the loudest is where I would start. My plan is to bring those voices to the board and work with others (board, membership, & staff) to develop practical solutions. This is not an individual exercise.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I would like to begin that conversation with the membership about what they want accomplished. I would suggest working to make most of our positions pay and benefits (PCN's) to be allocated from the base budget and have as few as possible grant funded positions. Grant funding can be used for mostly programming. I would work to make sure we keep our jobs- considering the memo that just came out about duplicity etc and we have an active campaign to increase the budget. I would also like to us to be an equitable and inclusive union. We need to be as aligned as possible and be able to hash it out when we aren't. No one should be left behind.

City of Austin Candidates: Vice-President

David
Cruz

he/him



**Personal
Statement**

For almost 8 years, I’ve worked in the public sector and was previously a member of SEIU Local 5000. Since joining AFSCME, I’ve represented Local 1624 on climate justice issues in our community and at the national level. I believe working toward a carbon-free future is an act of solidarity with all people. But if climate change impacts working people most, labor must lead. I will fight for energy workers during the transition to green power, push for safety measures during extreme weather, and hold the City and County to their climate commitments.

**Describe your
involvement in
the union to
date.**

I am a founding member of the National AFSCME Climate Caucus. As a delegate to the 2024 International Convention, I worked with union members across the country to bring support for climate action. I’ve also pushed for climate justice in our own union hall. I represented our union as a part of a community coalition to reduce our carbon emissions while protecting worker jobs at Austin Energy. I served as a panelist for a town hall and successfully fought the construction of a new gas plant. In addition, I’ve tabled community events, knocked doors for labor-endorsed candidates, and helped sign up my co-workers to become union members. In the past year, the only general or special-called meeting I missed was in February, when the meeting fell a few days after the birth of my daughter.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

- 1) Climate Action—Extreme weather threatens workers, and the City and County should put in place protections and hazard pay for extreme heat and cold weather. Additionally, utility workers must have their jobs protected as we fight for green infrastructure.
- 2) Protecting Pay and Benefits—The progressive pay raise will lift up all workers. I will push for a more progressive scale in the future. And as org charts change and management threatens telework, we must protect worker benefits and quality of life.
- 3) Your Union, Your Voice—The union is not the board or staff, it is each and every one of us. To tackle all the challenges we face, we need all hands on deck. The board should facilitate greater member action and maintain transparency and accountability of board activity.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I've seen the members of this union come off the sidelines in my two years at AFSCME 1624. If elected, I would push the board to empower and support workers in pursuing action that draws in more members. I would push for stronger support for grievances, and track outcomes closely. The union must work for our members. I would advocate for our jobs and pay as the City and County stare down budget cuts, especially for folks earning below the median wage. I would push for solidarity actions with community organizations, particularly with the labor and climate coalition, so we can build our capacity to take on future projects. Last, I would prioritize strong climate commitments while protecting jobs and implementing new safety policies.

City of Austin Candidates: Vice-President

Jeremy
Garza

they/he



**Personal
Statement**

Over the past 17 years, Jeremy Garza has built a career of service across universities, nonprofits, libraries, & local government, while always standing with their unions. In every job, Jeremy has seen leadership treat staff as expendable, which motivates him to fight for fair pay & hold leaders accountable to workers & the communities we serve. Born & raised in Austin, Jeremy knows that collective power comes from building relationships across differences & uniting around shared goals. They are committed to an inclusive, transparent, & effective union where every member is seen and valued.

**Describe your
involvement in
the union to
date.**

I became a member of AFSCME 1624 when I joined the City of Austin eight years ago and have supported campaigns, meetings, and conversations to strengthen our union. My organizing roots began as an undergraduate in Poughkeepsie, NY, where I supported SEIU 620 workers and learned the importance of “lifting as we rise” by building coalitions for collective liberation and justice. Since then, I have organized with UAW 2210 and UAW 2865 in Southern California, and AFSCME 2822 in Minneapolis, MN. Across every workplace, I’ve stood with frontline workers against systems that devalue labor, supporting members in raising concerns, staying engaged, and ensuring every voice shapes our union’s direction.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

Pay & Benefits – Born and raised in Austin, I know our workforce and our families are being priced out of the city we serve. We need raises and benefits that match the rising cost of living, as well as protections against job cuts in these uncertain times. Respect & Dignity – The revolving door of leadership leaves staff with whiplash as we're told to "get in line or get out" under shifting, unclear visions. This devalues service and drives staff out. I will fight for the dignity and respect of workers. Accountability & Transparency – Leaders too often escape accountability while workers and communities bear the consequences. I will push for transparent, equity-driven decisions rooted in member voices, moving us closer to leaders being accountable to those most affected by their actions.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If elected Vice President, I want to strengthen AFSCME 1624 as a union members trust, participate in, and feel proud of. My priorities are protecting pay and benefits, defending jobs, and ensuring every worker is treated with dignity and respect. I believe our strength lies in building coalitions and bridging differences — uniting around workers' rights even when our values or approaches vary. We cannot afford an us-versus-them mentality, especially as we face attacks from the federal government, state legislation, and the toxic cultures some leaders cultivate internally. I will foster an inclusive, equitable union where disagreements push us toward stronger solutions, and where transparency and accountability guide our shared fight.

City of Austin Candidates: Vice-President

**Joel
Manzo**

he/him



**Personal
Statement**

As a born and raised Austinite, It is an honor and a pleasure to be considered a civil servant for the community and city I love. Not just working for the city of Austin, but working in departments that I find very important and impact me at a personal level. The Austin Parks and Recreation Department and The Austin Watershed Protection Department. I also take extreme pride on being an AFSCME member, which has protected me working rights and strives to improve the working conditions for all municipal employees. Not just union members.

**Describe your
involvement in
the union to
date.**

I became an AFSCME member in 2015, when I was a Temporary Employee Open Water Lifeguard at Barton Springs Pool. During the cost of living wage initiative, we organized and testified in front of City Council, to advocate our right to earn a cost of living wage. Which we achieved our goal. This concern and organizing was also initiated during the Fight for \$15 and \$20 by 2020. During Covid I promoted Hazard Pay for all essential employees. In the summer of 2024, I was appointed a City of Austin Executive Vice President by the Executive Board. I was nominated a delegate for the AFSCME International Convention. I recently was involved in Block Walks, to promote the Tax Rate Election and Proposition Q initiative. I am currently the only the Site Operations Employee on the executive board.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

I believe in employee safety for Site Operations staff members. With respect to PPE and Water distribution. I will create action plans that provide staff member the appropriate PPE, and water resources. By providing resources to legitimize these suggestions.

I believe in treating all employees with respect, dignity, and professionalism. Which Site Operations staff members tend to be the most ignored employees with respect to said characteristics. I will share resources on how to improve their treatment on the job site.

I believe in paying all municipal employees a fair and living wage. Especially Site Operations staff members. Which tend to be the lowest paid employees. I will achieve these concerns by advocating during budget sessions and Cost of Living Wage initiatives.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

As an elected Executive Board Member. I hope to be more involved in our labor movement for fair and safe working conditions, resources, and wages.

I will be more involved in Block Walks, Committees, Council and Commissioners Court Meeting.

I hope to promote the "Site Operations" label to replace the Field Operations label that was been previously been deemed inappropriate.

I hope to provide the information, knowledge, and support to execute all concerns for our union members.

City of Austin Candidates: Vice-President

**Lisa
Martinez-
Guzman**

she/her



Personal Statement

I was born and raised in Austin's eastside. As a child I got to meet Cesar Chavez at Metz which began my understand of labor's importance. I'm a wife, a mother, and I know what it's like to raise a family as a working person in this City. My professional work has been civic minded at the Austin Area Urban League and then I joined AFSCME while working in front-line positions as a construction coordinator, licensed residential building inspector, and recently in office roles. I have a well-rounded understanding of how working conditions affect union members and I am excited to serve AFSCME.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

I have been an AFSCME members since I first began my work in the area of building inspections. This type of work puts you on job sites all around Austin and sometimes you don't have many interactions with your fellow workers until you go in the office for paperwork. I made sure inspectors knew about AFSCME and how it can help them. As a member I enjoy attending meetings and getting updates on our advocacy, and I've volunteered to provide feedback on our grievance data because making sure workers are supported is important to me. I've also been active in the City's affinity groups and as co-chair of my depts awards and recognition, these groups help me spread the message of AFSCME and show I have the skills to work collaboratively on projects which will translate well to the board.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

I believe members care about their pay and benefits and the ways the union can help. As someone that grew up in Austin but can no longer afford to live in City, its important that we help people every year get a good raise. I think we do this by speaking with a strong and collective voice. I think members really expect accountability and transparency in the union and at work. We have to hold ourselves accountable and make things better within the union when its needed. We also have to hold the City accountable and make sure workers are treated fairly. Members also want a union that they can feel like they are a part of, we need to be welcoming and honest with each other. I try to bring this mindset with me and will encourage it in others.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I hope that using my skillset I can help the union make good decisions and that our members feel like they are getting their money worth. I have a lot of experience working in groups like the executive board and I'm organized and a hard worker. I like to feel informed when making decisions so I will do research and come prepared. I think these things will be important to helping the group make sure we do what's best for the union. At the end of the day, we've got to work together to get things done and that's where our strength comes from.

City of Austin Candidates: Vice-President

Trish
Niswander

she/her



**Personal
Statement**

For 2½ years on the AFSCME 1624 Executive Board, I’ve worked to make our union more responsive, inclusive, and ready to fight for every member. With 8+ years of city service across departments, I know our challenges and our power. I’m running for re-election to keep elevating workers’ voices, winning material gains, and building a union that has our back. Let’s keep transforming together.

**Describe your
involvement in
the union to
date.**

Since joining the board, I have attended every board meeting, nearly every general meeting, and represented our local at the Central Labor Council without missing a session. Participation has included the AFSCME International and Texas AFL-CIO conventions, as well as union social events to connect with members about workplace struggles and successes. Efforts have focused on preserving telework for eligible city workers, securing resources and fair compensation for frontline employees, and contributing to the Member Organizing Committee, which is producing a Know Your Rights guide, training members, and doing outreach. Service on the Tax Rate Election Committee has included canvassing the community and recruiting members to help protect city services.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

First, protecting pay and benefits: the progressive raise was a win, and the fight continues for fairer pay scales, strong benefits, and preserving telework and quality of life.

Second, member voice: the union is all of us, not just the board. Power grows when more members get involved, so transparency, accountability, and active participation must be prioritized.

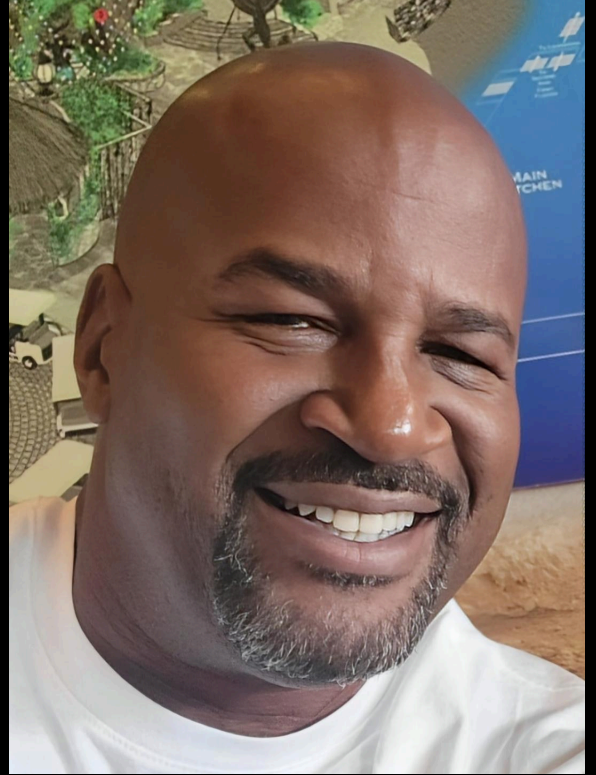
Third, members as leaders: our members need real opportunities to build skills, speak out, and take on leadership roles in the union and the broader community.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

Grow membership so more workers can stand together and win real gains. Codify telework as a right for those who can perform their jobs remotely. Keep frontline workers' health, safety, and satisfaction at the center of every decision. Make union operations transparent, accessible, and full of opportunities for members to lead, speak out, and shape the future. Building strength, fairness, and inclusion in our union benefits every worker.

City of Austin Candidates: Vice-President

**Dayne
Williams**



Personal Statement

I am a proud AFSCME member and the union has made a difference in my life so I want to share that with others. I believe in everything unions represent to protect the integrity and rights of employees and hold employers accountable. I've worked entry level positions up to being responsible for other workers at Austin Resource Recovery so I've seen it all. I have over 30 years of experience in the waste industry and I'm running for office so that I can be a continued voice for all employees and ensure employee rights are fair and equal.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

I have been a union member with 2 different unions for over 20 years. I have been an AFSCME member for 9 years. The way that I serve my union is by supporting my fellow workers on the job and making sure they have the equipment, support, and union backing to get their jobs done safely so they can get home to their families. When Austin Resource Recovery workers weren't being supplied with water on the job during the Texas summer, I got in touch with the union and worked with them to bring our own water in. I was willing to put myself against management because taking care of my fellow workers is the right thing to do. Not all of our ARR members can make it to meetings or get involved, so I'm looking forward to being that bridge and keep our front-line staff in focus.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

For union members at Austin Resource Recovery and other jobs where you are in the elements and in the community, staying comfortable and safe is the number one priority. Making sure our members working conditions are acceptable is my number one issue. The second biggest issue for members is knowing that their jobs are going to continue to provide enough income and stability for their families. We have to make sure our raises keep up with the economy and they can get food on the table. The third biggest issue is job protection. Retaliation is real at the City of Austin and we need the union to have our back. I want everyone to know that if something goes down that when you call the union they're going to take care of you and hold the City accountable like they did for me.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If elected, I hope to bring a voice to the members that have a hard time getting theirs heard in the union. There are a lot of front-line workers that believe in the union because of what it's been able to do for them and I want to bring that perspective. I think the board should really represent what our membership looks like and the jobs they do. I also would like to see us bring in more members from departments like mine where the workers could really use the union's support. If we make these things a priority then they'll be our priorities. I want to work on that with the board.

Travis County Candidates: Vice-President

**Jack
Chincanchan**

he/him



Personal Statement

Growing up in Travis County, my family depended on vital public services. I know that public workers are the heart of our community. They provide essential services and deserve essential protections including fair wages and benefits. That's why when I joined the county in 2020, I was proud to become an AFSCME member. It's been an honor serving both the public and our AFSCME family as a member, on our board, and a delegate to the Central Labor Council. I ask for your support to continue building a stronger and more united union with the power to fight for the wages and protections we deserve.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

I became an AFSCME member as soon as I joined the County and have been an active member ever since. I've had the opportunity to represent our members on our Executive Board and as a Delegate to the Central Labor Council. I've worked alongside our members by lobbying and testifying at public hearings to successfully demand better pay for County workers. One early success was securing higher cost of living adjustments and a stipend for bilingual workers. I've coordinated with our staff to get AFSCME access to county worksites to recruit new members. I've marched and tabled with the union at community events and marches like Pride, Juneteenth, Cesar Chavez and many others to help increase our presence, recruit new members, and spread the word about the work we are doing.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

1)COMPENSATION! 2)Representation 3)Protections.
Our union members keep our county and city running every day. We are the reason people in our community can depend on critical infrastructure, utilities, roads, and the basic services we all need access to. Our work should be valued, respected, and compensated appropriately. We deserve protections and stability at our jobs to feel safe and be able to provide for ourselves and our families. To address this I'll continue to advocate so our elected leaders understand and acknowledge that our public workforce is our greatest asset and firmly commit to working with AFSCME to ensure better compensation and benefits. I'll also work with our AFSCME staff to ensure every grievance is taken seriously so our members can be confident we have their back.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I hope to bring my experience working in manual labor, organizing, and emergency response addressing different needs across the county and city to help provide better representation for our members. If we want to make sure we are all treated with respect and dignity and have safe, stable jobs with fair compensation, then we need to have a union that can effectively work for us. We know there's strength in numbers. So I want to continue to help us build a bigger, stronger and more unified union with the power we need to turn our demands into reality.

Travis County Candidates: Vice-President

Morgan
Davis

he/him



**Personal
Statement**

Another time I have many stories for you. The most important story is learning that together we are stronger. I don't run against anyone. We are together asking to represent you. The interests of all, Not just the few.

I can go over my resume. It's long and boring. I want to meet and talk. We all want the same thing: wages, care for our children, and a roof.

**Describe your
involvement in
the union to
date.**

Meetings, tabling, and marching. Community is everything.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

Wages and health care. Everything else falls under these categories.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

I have worked in every facet of politics and law. It's time to use that knowledge for good.

Travis County Candidates: Vice-President

Armando Martinez



Personal Statement

I am a born and raised in Austinite and have worked for Travis County for 17 years and counting. I have been with AFSCME Local 1624 for all of my years with the County. I enjoy helping fellow Travis County Employees in securing better raises and equality within their departments and throughout Travis county. I am eligible to retire Oct 1, but I'm not ready yet... I'm looking forward to helping out fellow brothers and sisters in solidarity.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

I have been serving the union since I first became a member. When I'm on the job I talk to my coworkers about why its important to be a union member because they have our back. I needed to the union's help during a hard time in my career but because we were successful I am able to use this story to show people why we've got to stick together as union brothers and sisters. I have been on the executive board for the last 6 years and bring the perspective of someone that doesn't have an office job, I'm out working at different buildings in the county and I think this is important so workers like me have a voice in how the union is run.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

I think union members care about getting respect and dignity from management. We are asked to do hard jobs and not always treated fairly. I want to make sure when workers are mistreated they know how to get the help they need. On the board I want to make sure our staff are able to do that for them. Members also want job security. It goes hand in hand with respect and we protect ourselves by holding management and the County accountable. I also think members want to make sure what they are getting paid is fair and takes care of their needs. I am a father and a grandfather, I sacrificed a lot to make sure my family was taken care of and my kids could go to college. I want the same thing for all my union brothers and sisters. I will fight for them on the board.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If re-elected I want to make sure we keep the strength of the union. We have to put in the work as members and I will do it on the board. I will work with my fellow board members to find the ways we can grow and support workers. We are stronger together and I will listen to what anyone has to say and try and decide what the best thing will be for all of us. I also want for us to have a culture where we are all respecting each other even when we might not agree. We all want the same things lets find the common ground and be the powerful union that the County has to listen to. Solidarity.

Travis County Candidates: Vice-President

Alice
Navarro

she/her



**Personal
Statement**

I’m a social worker and union organizer who helped launch the United Workers of Integral Care union in 2021. After joining the county in 2023, I took some time to heal after my father’s passing, then jumped into AFSCME 1624 and hit the ground running. I want dedicated, active leaders representing Travis County on the board, and that is why I have decided to run for this election. At work, I lead initiatives that help people secure family-sustaining incomes, and I’ll do the same as your County VP. Every county job matters—and every worker deserves a salary that supports their family.

**Describe your
involvement in
the union to
date.**

Since signing my membership card last October, I have attended every general membership meeting and currently serve on the Organizing Committee. I am also a co-founder of the County Compensation Work Group. Recognizing the need for equitable representation in our outreach efforts, I proposed and helped establish the Communications Committee. This past summer, I was part of the delegation that represented the union at the AFL-CIO Constitutional Convention in San Antonio. I regularly show up at hearings, rallies, and commissioners’ court to support union-backed initiatives. I’ve recruited new members, earned recognition, and am trusted by coworkers as a strong voice for AFSCME 1624—proudly representing our union everywhere.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

Protect compensation/benefits: Every public servant deserves a living wage, and it's the duty of city and county officials to provide it. I will fight for fair, equitable pay for all workers that strengthens—not sacrifices—essential benefits like health care.

Better grievance process: Having gone through the grievance process myself, I know how hard it can be. Our union needs a stronger, unified system that resolves issues quickly with dignity and accountability, and protects workers from further harm. I will push to strengthen that process.

More county representation: I'll also work to boost county representation, because our union is strongest when all voices are included. By recruiting more county members, I'll ensure their needs and challenges are heard, valued, and championed.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If elected, I will prioritize rebuilding county membership numbers and addressing the serious challenges staff face, including workplace bullying and a lack of job resources. These are areas where our union must lead and grow collective power. I will foster a culture of accessibility and visible leadership by meeting members face-to-face, listening to concerns, and ensuring the union responds effectively. I'll encourage union staff to do the same, while continuing to support efforts for progressive pay that uplifts our lowest- and middle-wage workers. I will advocate for transparency regarding all board decisions and how members' dues are spent. With your vote, we will work together to make sure that Travis County employees are not left behind.

Travis County Candidates: Vice-President

**Tonya
Nixon**



Personal Statement

I am a dedicated AFSCME member and believe in service to the union and my community. I've been a strong proponent of community involvement and representation, while also advocating for the working class, which I believe enhances political participation and our democracy. I'm asking members to keep me on the board because of what I am able to contribute to AFSCME's advocacy for Travis County employees. My experiences in working with different departments at Travis County, my understanding of the Commissioners Court, and my dedication to workers means I can be effective for members.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

I have been a dedicated member of AFSCME for over 16 years. Throughout this period, I've gained invaluable insights from our representatives and have stood in solidarity with them and fellow members, serving as a collective voice for fair, safe, and equitable workplaces as well as civic engagement. Because I actively participate and have a strong connection to our communities, I was elected as the first black female Constable in Travis County and Central Texas, and I am currently serving a 2nd term at Precinct One. As a Travis County official, I understand it is my responsibility to openly, emphatically, support the labor movement. We need the community to see that union priorities are County priorities. I am grateful that I can serve AFSCME in this way

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

County members want to make sure they are being compensated well for their work. Travis County continues to face decisions about a market study and also making sure those not affected get a raise that's meaningful. I will make sure what we advocate for is fair and reasonable. Members also want representation, they want a board that understands their perspectives and the community I serve. This has always been important to me and I'm glad I've been able to bring my experiences and viewpoint to the board. Lastly, I think members want a respectful union environment where we can get our work done together without alienating each other. I wholeheartedly believe in that principle and share the same core values that unite us in solidarity.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

If the members return me to the board, I want to be a part of growing AFSCME's power at the County and in Central Texas. We have an opportunity to get our membership to 5,000 members and make ourselves a force to be reckoned with. We are going to need a board that provides good strategic direction, oversight, and empowers our members to do great things. In my professional and life and my work with AFSCME I have those skills. I believe AFSCME consistently demonstrates that our roles are not merely jobs, but rather a genuine passion and commitment to the work being accomplished. I want the world to see this too.

Travis County Candidates: Vice-President

Raven
Perttyman

she/her



**Personal
Statement**

I'm running for Travis County VP because Travis County needs stronger representation. I will provide leadership that is transparent and engaged. My leadership will reflect the hard work and dedication of my fellow members.

Too often, the voices of the people who are essential and serve our community selflessly every day are overlooked. I plan to change that. As VP, I'll fight to make sure workers have a real seat at the table, and that decisions reflect the needs, challenges, and experiences of those on the front lines. Together, we can build a more responsive, united, and effective union.

Describe your involvement in the union to date.

I've been a proud member of AFSCME for over five years. During this time, I have attended meetings, reached out to union leaders to advocate for Travis County Employees, recruited members to strengthen Travis County representation, and been a vocal supporter of union efforts.

Year after year, I attend compensation hearings to vocally advocate for Travis County Employees. Through this process I have championed fair wages and reclassifications.

As a TNR employee, I have spoken out against potentially unsafe conditions. I've advocated measures and equipment that ensure we all go home safely at the end of our shifts.

I take the spirit of union organizing seriously and proudly represent AFSCME during my personal volunteer efforts.

Describe the top three issues facing union members today, and explain how you would address them if elected.

The number one threat to our union today, is the threat of being erased. Weaken AFSCME and you erase our voices. We can't let that happen. If elected, I will provide a voice for Travis County employees that speaks loudly whenever our work conditions are affected. I'll fight for real representation so that our frontline issues can't be ignored!

The second greatest challenge we face is the fight for fair pay. This year while the City of Austin has secured a COLA, advocacy for Travis County started too late. The results? We are fighting for the scraps at the end of the budget process. This is unacceptable. We must make compensation a priority.

Finally, trust demands transparency. We deserve timely, accurate, and accessible information on Travis County policy changes and issues.

What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

With your help, I want to strengthen how our union serves Travis County Employees. Together, we will ensure that all workers have a clear and consistent voice in the decisions that impact their lives.

With your vote, I will fight erasure by being a strong voice for our members.

With your vote, I will push for compensation that is competitive. Compensation that honors the value of our public service.

With your vote, I will promote a culture of openness and accountability.

With your vote, we can do this together!

About Local Board Elections

Overview

Every two years, AFSCME 1624 holds elections for our executive board. The Executive Board has six positions and is responsible for:

- Governing the local union except when local meetings are in session;
- Deciding policies, aims and means not specifically provided for in the local constitution;
- Employing the business manager.

Learn more about this process in the Local Union Election Manual:

<https://www.afscme.org/about/governance/document/AFSCME-local-union-election-manual.pdf>.

About the Voter Guide

- To ensure an informed member electorate, the Election Committee produced a voter guide for the 2025 AFSCME 1624 Local Board Elections.
- The deadline for candidates to submit their responses was Sunday, September 28, at 11:59 p.m. CT. Late responses were not accepted.
- Information was published as submitted. Candidates could not edit or change their responses once submitted.
- For candidates who did not provide a response, the voter guide will list only their name, the position they are nominated for, and the statement: “No response received.”
- If candidates fail to provide a photo that meets the requirements, the voter guide will publish the submitted information without a photo.

Open Positions

PRESIDENT (AT-LARGE)

- Presides over all local meetings;
- Is a member of all committees except the election committee;
- Signs checks, along with Secretary-Treasurer;
- Appoints local's standing and special committees;
- Reports to membership regarding the local's progress and official acts.

VICE PRESIDENT (AT-LARGE)

- Assists the President;
- Assumes some duties in the president's absence (including leading meetings).

RECORDING SECRETARY (AT-LARGE)

- Records proceedings of general and executive board meetings;
- Carries out official correspondence of the local unless the board directs otherwise.

SECRETARY-TREASURER (AT-LARGE)

- Keeps records and receipts of all local business;
- Prepares and signs checks;
- Prepares monthly membership reports for international and local membership.

CITY VICE-PRESIDENT (*ONLY CITY EMPLOYEES CAN VOTE ON THIS POSITION*)

- 5 seats on the board proportional to city membership in the union
- Vote on board matters.

COUNTY VICE-PRESIDENT (*ONLY COUNTY EMPLOYEES CAN VOTE ON THIS POSITION*)

- 3 seats on the board proportional to county membership in the union
- Vote on board matters.

Learn more: The Local Constitution contains an exhaustive list of responsibilities for each position and is available at: <https://afscme1624.org/local-1624-constitution>

Election Regulations

- No union funds or resources—and no funds or resources of any employer—may be used in campaigning for union office.
- No publication of any kind which is sponsored by or supported by the union can make any endorsement or otherwise support any candidate for union office.
- Union staff members shall not take sides nor campaign on behalf of candidates in local union elections.
- Every member has a right to a secret ballot.
- Proxy voting is not permitted.
- Once a vote has been cast, it cannot be changed or removed.
- A candidate who receives a majority (more than one-half) of the votes cast for a position will be declared elected.

If you have any questions or concerns about the election or need to report violations of election or voting regulations, please contact us at elections1624@gmail.com.