



Thursday, April 22, 2021

Dallas City Council Candidate Survey

Name Leland Burk

Office Sought/District Dallas City Council District 13

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Phone Number (214) 212-2353

Since March 2020, have you visited Dallas Public Library online? YES

Before COVID, how many times a year did you visit a Dallas Public Library Branch in person? 1-5 times

Which DPL locations(s) have you visited? Bachman Lake Preston Royal

The Dallas Public Library is committed to providing clean, inviting and safe libraries for customers and staff. Do you agree that Dallas Public Library buildings are clean and inviting? YES

Library Programs

Dallas Public Library provides GED classes, preschool storytimes, English Language Learning classes, promoted adult literacy, offers small business support, free internet access and assists with resumes, job searches and job applications FOR FREE to all Dallas residents. Several facts suggest more services are needed:

- Dallas has the third-highest poverty rate among U.S. cities with populations larger than 1 million people.*
- Dallas has the highest child poverty rate among those cities.*
- Dallas has the lowest percentage of adults who have a high school diploma among 22 peer cities nationally.*

*"Micciche, Dan (2014, August 26). Restore full funding to Dallas public libraries. Dallas Morning News (<https://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/commentary/2014/08/26/restore-full-funding-to-dallas-public-libraries>)

Libraries are an important resource for children. Through private funding the Dallas Public Library offers FREE preschool programs, hosts the SMART Summer Reading Program, provides computer and Wi-Fi access. Do you support the library providing programs for our youngest citizens?

YES

Libraries are also critical resources to Dallas's senior population; however, funding for senior programs is limited to private sources. Do you agree that it is important to increase public funding for senior programs at the Dallas Public Library?

YES

Program funding is paid for by private funding obtained by the nonprofit Friends of the Dallas Public Library, not by tax dollars. The city does not pay for these library programs and services. Do you agree that some public funding should be allocated to programming at the Dallas Public Library?

YES

Compared to peer cities like Phoenix, San Diego, Denver and Detroit, the Dallas Public Library is one of the poorest funded library systems per capita. Do you feel that Dallas deserves a better funded library system?

YES

Following the 2008-2009 financial crisis, the Dallas Public Library's budget was cut by 40%, which led to Dallas library hours being cut dramatically and the loss of 50% of the staff. Budget cuts continued through 2011-2012. Finally, in 2014, the City of Dallas committed to restore the library's budget.

With its current operating budget, in 2019, the Dallas Public Library did some amazing things including:

- Over 11 million people visited a Dallas Public Library location or accessed the library online
- Nearly 500,000 attended a program or event at one of the 29 branch locations
- More than 11 million items circulated with an additional 3.5 million digital items checked out
- 85,000 children and caregivers attended a literacy program at a library
- Library staff connected over 1,000 people to social services and provided over 3,200 programs for library customers experiencing homelessness
- Over 25,000 adults attended English Language Learning, Basic Reading, GED and citizenship classes
- 213 people received their GED through Dallas Public Library
- Launched Applied English classes at 8 branches which help participants practice their English language skills while doing practical activities such as filling out standard forms, grocery shopping and banking.

- Library visitors logged nearly 450,000 hours of computer time

If elected, will you commit to continuing to responsibly grow the library's operating budget?

YES

If yes, what are your ideas?

One critical aspect of our Library system is that people are not using it simply to check out books, but are using the facilities as a resource for upskilling and job search activities, as well as an outlet for educational programming for children. As a council member, I'll focus my efforts on increasing these parts of the operating budget, as I believe people will need these options as we come out of the pandemic. When it comes to funding at libraries, dollar amounts that may seem small - compared to the overall budget - can have big impacts for our city.

The Dallas Public Library's materials budget to purchase books, media, ebooks/e-audiobooks and databases has remained essentially flat since FY 2015. The cost to provide these materials continues to increase. Will you commit to support a budget that provides the library the resources it needs to meet our community's needs?

YES

In your opinion, what is the role of the Dallas Public Library?

The role of the library is clearly stated in the mission statement that the Library exists to strengthen communities by connecting people, inspiring curiosity, and advancing lives. To me, this mission is of critical importance at a time when many people in our community are in need of assistance in reconnecting to the world and learning how to advance in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The library is a place that can help solve some of our biggest issues, such as alleviating our city's digital divide, and helping residents earn credentials like getting a GED, or learning a marketable skill.

Additional Comments

I am excited by the opportunity to build upon the momentum of the new Vickery Meadow Branch Library as a member of the council. This facility is a game-changing catalyst the community needs to become a destination in our city. I look forward to supporting and visiting this facility and supporting strong basics, like quality libraries across the City.



Monday, April 19, 2021

Dallas City Council Candidate Survey

Name Gay Donnell Willis

Office Sought/District Dallas City Council District 13

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Phone Number (214) 549-1820

Since March 2020, have you visited Dallas Public Library online? YES

Before COVID, how many times a year did you visit a Dallas Public Library Branch in person? 1-5 times

Which DPL locations(s) have you visited?

Central Library Bachman Lake

Bookmarks at NorthPark Center Forest Green

Oak Lawn Preston Royal

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Library Programs

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YES

If yes, what are your ideas?

Our libraries should be used as neighborhood resources to more easily link neighbors with workforce development, training and upskilling; and better communicate what our City, County, DISD nonprofits and the private sector have to offer with regard to grants and programs to accomplish lifting up our citizens education, income, health, etc.

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YES

In your opinion, what is the role of the Dallas Public Library?

I would like to see it evolve as a more widely used resource to take the programs offered by our nonprofits, governments and the private sector closer to the people, so they are more aware of, and can more easily access, their options with regard to workforce development, health, housing, etc.

Additional Comments

As a former Friends of the Dallas Public Library Board member, I value the role of libraries in our City. I'd be an advocate and awareness-builder of the current programs that FODPL funds, but also work to expand the thinking about how libraries can be a franchise for workforce development, arts and other programs that uplift and enrich our citizens lives.