

**Personal Individual Commentary Authored by Margaret Harris,**  
**8th Ward Democratic Committee Person, 13th Division**  
**(Excerpted and Edited for Ward-Endorsed Candidates for Non-Judicial Office)**

**Mayor: Vote for one (1)**

**#31. Jim Kenney** I strongly support Jim Kenney for Mayor. **I believe the Soda Tax, which he has championed, has been beneficial, not harmful.** It has enabled the city to provide quality Pre-K to thousands of mostly low-income children. Under his leadership, Philadelphia has regained control of the School District of Philadelphia, has increased funding for public schools, given public school teachers their first pay raise in five years, and created 12 Community Schools to provide essential resources and support services in the neighborhoods they serve. He has been a fierce defender of immigrants, ending the city's cooperation with ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and defeated the Trump Administration's attempt to deny federal funds to welcoming cities like Philadelphia that provide equal protection to all its citizens – regardless of their immigration status. He has raised the minimum wage to \$15/hr for all City employees and contractors. He has maintained the city's commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement. Under his leadership, Philadelphia's local jail population has safely decreased by over 40% – effectively depopulating the City's House of Correction. I believe he deserves our support to serve as Philadelphia's Mayor for 4 more years.

**City Commissioners**

**#40. Kahlil Williams** Kahlil has spent thousands of hours promoting voting rights and fair elections, and, in 2016, recruited, trained, and oversaw more than 400 legal volunteers as part of Election Protection, the nation's largest non-partisan voter protection program. His other recent pro bono efforts include representing the receivership for Mt. Moriah Cemetery in Philadelphia and advising the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights on developing legal issues.

In a March 27 article in the Inquirer, Mike Newell wrote: "And Kahlil Williams, a 40-year-old attorney at Ballard Spahr with such deep experience in voting-rights work that he seems almost comically overqualified for the job Clark treated like a chore." After Penn State and Penn, he earned his law degree at Columbia, squeezing in stints at the Brennan Center for Justice and the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund. In 2006, as a fellow for the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, he helped to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It was his job to prep witnesses for questioning, including the attorney of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**Register of Wills (Vote for 1)**

**#49. Ronald R. Donatucci.** Incumbent and has been in office close to 40 years. The 8th ward voted to endorse him and given the other two candidates, I don't disagree.

**Sheriff (Vote for 1)**

**#51. Malika Rahman.** A seven year veteran of the Sheriff's office and three years as a police officer. In the sheriff's office as a deputy, she was mostly in the courts but also spent some time in the real estate division. Her experience in the real estate division caused her to understand the pain of those losing their homes. She said, "Displacement is still displacement whether you do it nicely or don't do it nicely," she says. "When you're losing your home, that is the worst part of your life. I want to help people land a little softer than they have landed." She resigned from her job to run for sheriff. "Besides her work in the sheriff department, she also runs a nonprofit, [Be A Great You](#), which connects professionals with teenagers to serve as mentors; educates youth on everything from financial literacy to job, relationship and social skills; and offers small scholarships. Rahman says the group has worked with about 1,000 youth since before and after its official launch in 2017. That work has kept her connected to families, and neighborhoods, where she says she has tried to educate people on ways to stay in their homes before it's too late." Philadelphia Public Citizen, April 8, 2019.

**Council at Large (Vote for no more than 5)**

**The 8th Ward has endorsed the following 5 candidates:**

**#56. Helen Gym. Incumbent.** Helen Gym is loved by many. Gym is an effective leader who knows how to organize and win progressive change: passing the nation's most expansive Fair Workweek law; restoring nurses, counselors, social workers and bilingual staff to our public schools; and winning millions of dollars to support youth programs and establishing a legal defense fund for tenants facing eviction. She is committed to immigrant rights, securing housing as a human right, strengthening our public schools for our children and teachers, fighting for better wages and jobs; and demanding a justice system that works for every Philadelphian, and environmental justice. We can rely on her to engage in those fights, and, based on her amazing one-term track record, to be effective in all of them. A long-time activist, she has exhibited the dedication, energy and ability to be an outstanding advocate on Council for educational equity, economic opportunity, and environmental justice. (from Neighborhood Networks website endorsement) She does NOT support repealing the soda tax. She does support ending the 10 year tax abatement, and she does support ending councilmanic prerogative.

**#60. Eryn Santamoor** Eryn says she is running because she believes in city management. She was Mayor Michael Nutter's Deputy Managing Director and as such developed the city's 311 for residents to access Philadelphia services. She presents herself as a person who knows how to get policies implemented. She says she was motivated to run for City Council at Large after discovering 6 years ago that her husband was an addict and an alcoholic and the family going into treatment together. She realized how important it was for high quality treatment to be available to all people suffering from substance abuse and their families. Santamoor supports the soda tax, sanctuary cities, safe injection sites, term limits, charter schools, reforming the tax abatement, charter schools, and more bike lanes.

**#66 Allan Domb. Incumbent.** First elected to City Council in 2015, Domb focused on holding the city government accountable, collecting delinquent property taxes, and investing in our children and public school system. Allan has also made it a priority to develop Philadelphia into a place where local entrepreneurs can thrive and where there are growth opportunities for all. He has pushed for a more careful oversight of city funds. including passing legislation to establish independent audits and property appraisals He also renewed efforts to collect delinquent taxes that out-of-town landlords owe to the city and passed legislation to streamline all aspects of city government to make it more efficient. Every year, Allan donates his City Council salary to the School District of Philadelphia. He has advocated for making financial literacy and technology training, including coding, the cornerstone of public education in Philadelphia. So far, Allan has paid for 122 public school teachers to take financial literacy courses at the Federal Reserve Bank so that they can teach financial literacy to our students, and he has sponsored coding programs in 25 Philadelphia public schools. Allan believes in second chances and giving returning citizens the opportunities they need to thrive. In 2018, Allan began sponsoring and paying for a financial literacy course for returning citizens, and Allan has offered to pay for financial literacy courses for every citizen returning from the city's Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility in 2019. Allan is also paying \$35,000 for the first-ever prison coding and tech class program, taught by Sylvester Mobley of Coded by Kids. Allan and the program hope to have fifteen returning citizens in the first class trained in technology and coding so that these citizens can obtain good-paying jobs in the tech world.

**#78 Derek Green. Incumbent.** Green has been called "the leading small and community-based business advocate on City Council." An innovative thinker in this domain, he is interested in trying new and promising policies in this field that make him an irreplaceable force for those important interests. In particular, he has championed two policies that make him stand out. First is the promotion of worker and community-based co-ops. Green found scarce dollars in the City budget to fund a project that provides technical assistance to co-op start-ups all around the City. And, recognizing that co-ops and other community and minority owned businesses have an overwhelming need for affordable credit, Green has been working for three years to get the City to create a Philadelphia Public bank that would take Philadelphia's credit dependence away from the moguls of Wall Street and replace them with an institution that puts Philadelphia first. Green's record is also noteworthy for seeking to bring real democracy to our imperfect one, by promoting public financing of elections for Mayor and City Council." Green supports the soda tax, sanctuary city status, reforming tax abatements, term limits, and bicycle lanes. He opposes safe injection sites and charter schools.

**#80 Justin DiBerardinis.** DiBerardinis' track record and experience as an organizer in working class and impoverished communities and, as a Council staffer, developing legislation promoting progressive taxation, land trust development, and corporate accountability, will make him a Council Person we can trust to advance the people's interests over vested interests. His inspiring campaign calls for the enactment of a New Deal for Philadelphia — it's about growing the public sector and supporting living wage employment to fully staff neglected programs that serve neighborhood people in

schools, parks, libraries, and recreation centers. He is also intent on finishing the work he started on Council staff to reconstruct our tax code to support working people and small business, and making big business – in and out of the City- pay their full share. He has built a broad and diverse coalition of supporters that will enable him to mobilize public support for his unique vision and bring it to fruition.

**DISTRICT COUNCIL (2nd District) (Vote for 1)**

**# 85. Kenyatta Johnson:** “Kenyatta Johnson’s tenure in City Council since 2011 has been both transformative and troubled. On labor rights, he has been a brave ally. Thanks to his leadership and UniteHere!, workers at Philadelphia’s stadiums have maintained some of the better contracts in the city; at the airport, he supported the unionization of over a thousand workers, in the teeth of fierce lobbying from the airlines. He was a staunchly reliable vote on Fair Workweek and raising the minimum wage for municipal contractors. These policies have benefited working people, primarily working people of color, across the city. Still, gentrification in his district has been fierce, and despite his vote in favor of the tax on new construction to fund the housing trust fund, Johnson’s leadership on this score has been mixed. Recent revelations that he helped in turning city land over to a preferred developer are part of a larger lack of honesty regarding development politics in his district.” Reclaim website. Johnson supports the soda tax, reforming the tax abatement, sanctuary cities, and more bike lanes.

**Margaret’s comments:** I regret Johnson’s lack of forthrightness about his participation in aiding a friend’s development deal, but in the end I find his support for labor policies, Pre-K and Rebuild Programs funded by the soda tax more important. I believe that Johnson is genuinely committed to funding for Pre-K and Rebuild, while Vidas’ record is the opposite. The benefits to the children of Philadelphia in Kenyatta’s support of the beverage tax outweigh the bad judgement over turning city land to a friend.

**DISTRICT COUNCIL (5<sup>th</sup> District) (Vote for 1)** The Ward endorsed Council President Darrell Clarke, who is running without opposition, so there is no commentary.

**4 Ballot Questions: VOTE YES on all FOUR:**

**#1 PROPOSED CHARTER CHANGE QUESTION #1 (Bill No. 180820)**

Shall The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to change certain gender specific references (such as "councilman," "councilmen," and "Councilmanic") to gender neutral references (such as "councilmember," "councilmembers," and "Council")? Vote **YES**.

**#2 PROPOSED CHARTER CHANGE QUESTION #2 (Bill No. 190007)**

Shall The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to establish and define the functions of the Office of Immigrant Affairs, headed by a Director of Immigrant Affairs? **Vote Yes**

**#3 Proposed Charter Change Question #3 (Bill No. 190102)**

Shall The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to call on the General Assembly to either increase the Pennsylvania minimum wage now, so that it reaches \$15 an hour, in stages, by 2025; or allow the City of Philadelphia to itself provide for a decent, family sustaining, living wage for working Philadelphians?

**Vote Yes.**

**#4 PROPOSED CHARTER CHANGE QUESTION #4 (Bill No. 180818)**

Shall The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter be amended to require the establishment of "Public Safety Enforcement Officers" to assist the Police Department in regulating the flow of traffic; to enforce and assist the appropriate City officers in the enforcement of ordinances relating to the quality of life in the City's neighborhoods; and to perform such other related duties as the Managing Director or Council may require? **Vote Yes**