

Democratic Party of Contra Costa County Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for seeking the endorsement of the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC).

Please submit your completed questionnaire and remit the endorsement application fee of \$30 no later than , August 12, 2024. Interviews will not be scheduled without both a completed questionnaire and received payment.

- Pay Endorsement Application Fee:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/2024campaignunityfund>.

1. Click on "Donate"
 2. The page will say "2024 Campaign Unity Funds" - Just fill in \$30 as the amount to pay.
- Complete Candidate Questionnaire.

IMPORTANT INFO

- Your application fee must be paid before questionnaires will be processed.
- Interviews will not be scheduled without both a completed payment and completed questionnaire.
- You must have submitted your questionnaire and payment **before August 12, 2024 before 11:59pm PST.**
- Your completed questionnaire will be added to the DPCCC website after all interviews are conducted.
- The DPCCC membership will vote on endorsements at a **Special Meeting on August 29, 2024.** You will be sent an invitation to the meeting which you are welcome to attend.

Email *

[Redacted]

Vision Statement: Democratic Party of Contra Costa County

The DPCCC aspires to be an organization where members are empowered and feel safe to be who they are, regardless of ethnic, cultural, or social demographics. We are committed to fostering equity and social justice through our policies and actions.

We hold ourselves accountable for unwanted behavior and we expect decision-making to be based on justice principles. We actively oppose **racism, sexism, classism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, and all other forms of prejudice wherever we see it**, and we take action individually and collectively to right past wrongs in our communities.

Section 1: Candidate Information

Name (First, Last): *

Susannah Meyer

Preferred Name (if different than campaign name):

.....

Age *

- Under 18
- 18 to 24
- 25-44
- 45-65
- Over 65
- Prefer not to disclose

Pronouns: *

- She/Her/Hers
- He/Him/His
- They/Them/Theirs
- Ze/Zie/Hir/Hirs
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other:

Gender Identity (*check all that apply.*): *

- Gender non-conforming
- Genderqueer
- Genderfluid
- Non-binary
- Woman
- Man
- Transgender
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other:

Sexual Identity (*check all that apply.*): *

- Bisexual
- Queer
- Gay
- Heterosexual or straight
- Lesbian
- Asexual
- Pansexual
- Prefer not to disclose
- Other:

With which racial or ethnic group(s) do you identify? (*Mark all that apply.*): *

Native American or Indigenous

Black, African-American

Eastern European

Latino/a/x/e

Pacific Islander

Asian

East Asian

South Asian

Southeast Asian

Middle Eastern, Northern African

Native Hawaiian

East African

West African

South African

Central African

White

Multiracial/Mixed Race

Prefer not to disclose

Other:

Which office are you seeking? *

Mayor, City of Brentwood

CA FPPC ID # *

1470965

Campaign Address *

[Redacted]

Campaign Website *

[Redacted]

Campaign Consultant/Manager *

n/a

Campaign Phone Number *

[Redacted]

Campaign Email *

[Redacted]

Candidate Phone Number *

[Redacted]

Candidate Email *

[Redacted]

Social Media Handles *

<https://www.facebook.com/susannah4brentwood/>,
https://www.instagram.com/susannah_brentwood_council/, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/susannah-meyer/>

1.1 - Why are you running for this office? Give no more than your top 3 reasons. *

I have been sitting on Brentwood City Council for almost 4 years. One of the more challenging lessons I have had to learn is that getting things done, even in a local municipality, takes much longer than expected. With that, I have goals I have implemented with pride and those that are still in the works. I am running to see through my long term goals and to continue the general work I have put in to keeping our residents first with every initiative and every vote. I still have work to do and want to continue to serve. Last, Brentwood has been incorporated for 75 years and has only had 2 female mayors. In 2024, the year of the woman, I think we are way overdue for having our 3rd!

1.2 - What are the responsibilities that come with the office you are running for? *

The mayor is responsible for: facilitating council meetings, working with the City Manager on finalizing council meeting agendas, signing all council related documents, swearing in new commissioners, acting as the primary city representative at events and outfacing in general, promoting economic development, and other duties as needed.

1.3 - What are your personal or professional qualifications that you believe make you the best candidate? *

I have served on City Council for almost 4 years - 2 as our appointed Vice Mayor. My day job is as Executive Director of a nonprofit serving older adults and adults with disabilities. In a past role I was a Senior District Representative for a State Senator. Having worked both in the for-profit/corporate world and the nonprofit world, I bring a perspective that is fiscally responsible, socially responsible, and resident-driven. I choose my committee and ad-hoc committee positions in areas where I have the most experience, the most passion, and where I can most make a positive impact. I continuously strive to see all sides of an issue and find balance and common ground in my voting whenever possible.

1.4 - What are your top goals for this office? How do you plan on achieving them? *

My goals for the next 4 years in part align with my focus areas for the past 4 years. I would like to continue to push for affordable INCLUSIONARY housing so Brentwood families can live in safe neighborhoods with their friends and peers. We raised our inclusionary percentage to 13%, and I would like to raise it higher to house even more families in need. I have heard from a group of moms that Brentwood needs housing for low-income adults with disabilities. I have started working this staff on this potential project and we are speaking with accessible/affordable housing developers to explore the possibilities. Brentwood is unique in its agricultural legacy. We need to honor that in our planning and make sure to not lose our history by protecting the farms in our sphere of influence. I supported this in part through our Ag Innovation Center planning and will continue to do so. Adaptive recreation is a need in our city and I have advocated for this programming repeatedly. We are at a point when we are now taking steps toward becoming more adaptive in this area but need to keep prioritizing the work. Current council approved significant steps in the planning of our Innovation Center, which will help to bring living wage jobs - a huge priority. We need to stay on task with this developing project and promote other job generating projects so our residents can have shorter commutes and a better quality of life.

1.5 - How do you plan on engaging your constituents in dialogue after you are elected? *

I would like to hold a monthly meet up at rotating sites throughout the city so residents have a consistent day/time when they know I will be available for in-person discussion. I have been an advocate for transparency and effective communication with residents from the start of my council career, so I plan to continue this high level of response.

1.6 - This is a 3-Part Question: Why are you seeking the endorsement of the DPCCC? How will you use our endorsement? How will you support other endorsed candidates and issues? *

The DPCCC is recognized in Contra Costa County and beyond as an organization that promotes democratic values, advocates and collaborates on common priorities for the betterment of county residents, and stands strong in support of the candidates it supports. I plan to use the endorsement to demonstrate the organization's support of my candidacy, especially to my voters who are democrats themselves. I have donated to other DPCCC endorsed candidates in the past and supported their campaign efforts. I plan to continue this practice. Many of the issues in my city are common across the county, and as I am a practicing democrat already, I plan to continue my practice of promoting these values in my initiatives and through my votes.

1.7 - Please feel free to include any additional information you would like us to consider in evaluating your candidacy. *

I am confident that Brentwood is way overdue for a female, democrat mayor. For over 20 years, we have been led by men in this role who were not democrats and did not fully represent our evolving population.

Section 2: Democratic History

2.1 - List your previous and current party affiliations. When did you first register as a Democrat and why? *

Democrat. Age 18 because my parents are democrats and I align with their views.

2.2 - I have read and acknowledge the California Democratic Party's current platform (value statement) and will adhere to these values in the performance of my elected position. *

To learn about the CADEM Platform, please click [here](#).

Yes

No

2.3 - In your opinion, which elements of the CADEM Platform are most relevant to the position you are seeking? If elected, how do you plan to advance them? *

Jobs and economic opportunities for Brentwood residents - as mentioned above, continue to advance development in our Innovation Center, which is zoned and designated for quality paying jobs. Also look at other economic development opportunities through the lens of bringing good jobs to our city. Support small businesses by exploring ways to streamline Brentwood's application and permit process and promoting training. Disabilities access and equity - continue to support programs and projects toward this goal through the ad-hoc committee I launched to support aging and disabilities community. Environmental preservation - through continued advocacy to maintain open spaces and back initiatives around banning oil and gas production within city limits. Identify additional actions to develop the city's Open Space and Conservation Element. Agriculture - support small farms and local farm-to-fork restaurants through initiatives and our pending Ag Innovation Center project. Housing - support initiatives that bring higher percentages of inclusionary affordable housing to our city.

2.4 - Have you actively supported policies and initiatives that prioritize and protect reproductive healthcare and freedom, and can you affirm your commitment to continuing this support if elected? *

- Yes
- No

2.5 - If elected, what would you do to advance equity, anti-racism, justice, and belonging? *

In January 2024 I joined our city's new Diversity/Equity/Belonging/Inclusion Ad-Hoc Committee, which we voted to make "standing" as of January 2025. Through this work, I am working with staff and a 2nd council member to make DEI training mandatory, explore DEI standards policies with vendors, be more forward in marketing and communications in our support as a city of cultural diversity, and support all events that highlight same.

2.6 - Have you actively opposed LGBTQIA+ issues, which may involve voting against solidarity, supporting harmful or exclusionary policies, or publicly expressing opposition through statements or comments? (i.e. voting against or making disparaging remarks about the display of pride flags, marriage equality, trans-inclusive policies, or queer-inclusive curricula). *

Yes

No

2.7 - Have you previously sought the endorsement of the DPCCC? If yes, for what elected office? Were you endorsed? *

City Council, 2020. Yes, I received the endorsement.

2.8 - Please list any elected offices, positions and date(s), which you hold/held or campaigned for as a candidate. *

Brentwood City Council, 2020

2.9 - In what ways have you supported and actively participated in the Democratic Party at the local, state, and national levels? *

In my former role as Senior District Representative for a local Democrat State Senator, I took part in multiple text banking projects. I canvassed in support of Governor Gavin Newsome. I have donated to city/county/state democrat candidate campaigns and attended many outreach and campaign events for candidates. I have not done a lot of endorsing of candidates, but in the 2020 election I did endorse democrat congressional and senate candidates.

2.10 - Please list any clubs, boards, commissions, and /or organizations with which you are an active member, including the length of your affiliation and any leadership position you hold/held. *

Joined Marsh Creek Democratic Club in 2020. I believe I have been a member of DPCCC in the past but I don't recall if my membership is current. Joined Brentwood Lions in 2022. Joined East Contra Costa Historical Society in 2023. Was appointed President of the Mayors & Councilmember Department for Cal Cities in 2022 and still sit on the board as past president. Through my day job (in Contra Costa specifically) I sit on the Contra Costa Transportation Authority Accessible Transportation Task Force and the Master Plan on Aging Impact Steering Committee.

2.11 - Have you ever endorsed non-Democrats? *

Yes

No

2.11a - If so, what were the circumstances?

Section 3: References & Club Endorsements

3.1 - Please list any other endorsements you have received for this campaign. *

None as of yet

3.2 - What other endorsements are you seeking? *

Marsh Creek Democratic Club, Alliance for a Better Brentwood, not sure which others yet

Some of the Democratic Clubs use this questionnaire in their endorsement process. If you would like to be considered for Democratic club endorsement(s), please contact the club(s) directly by going to our DPCCC website club's page:

<https://contracostadems.com/clubs/>

Part 2: DPCCC Values Section

Please proceed to fill out the 2nd section of the Candidate Questionnaire on the Democratic Party of Contra Costa County's Values.

DPCCC Value: Criminal Justice & Conflict Resolution

- *Opposes criminalization of low level offenses, advocates for Community Support Services, funding for prompt rape kit processing, gun violence prevention measures; Opposes scapegoating, racial profiling, religious profiling, bigotry, vigilantism, exploitation, and any xenophobic conduct that polarize communities and denounce actions by the government or individuals that keep undocumented immigrants in the shadows of our society; Supports Law Enforcement Training, Civilian Oversight Committees, independent investigators for cases involving the use of deadly force or in-custody deaths, restorative justice;*
- *Supports a properly funded and staffed the U.S. foreign service that promotes democracy and human rights around the world; Supports candidates who work to de-escalate tension especially in areas of conflict like Israel/Gaza, Sudan, Haiti, and other parts of the world through good faith negotiations and work for world peace; Endorse candidates who support the Democratic Party as it works to counter aggression by countries that violate the sovereignty of other countries and that fund and implement physical, cyber, and financial attacks on democracies and developing countries.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

I support the values listed above without exception. One specific example is that Brentwood is surrounded by farms that are frequently harvested by immigrant farm working families. I support Brentwood nonprofit Hijos del Campo in its work to assist these families and advocate for accessible resources for them. I have volunteered for this agency and financially supported its cause as well. As a sister-in-law to both Jewish and Palestinian family members, I have personal connections and opinions of the horrifying situation in Gaza. I do not support the killing of innocent people who have been victimized by leaders who seek power regardless of cost. As a City Council, we have unanimously supported human rights, peace, equity, and anti-racism, and continuously promote the diverse cultures of Brentwood as equally valued in our community.

DPCCC Value: Criminal Justice & Conflict Resolution

- *Opposes criminalization of low level offenses, advocates for Community Support Services, funding for prompt rape kit processing, gun violence prevention measures; Opposes scapegoating, racial profiling, religious profiling, bigotry, vigilantism, exploitation, and any xenophobic conduct that polarize communities and denounce actions by the government or individuals that keep undocumented immigrants in the shadows of our society; Supports Law Enforcement Training, Civilian Oversight Committees, independent investigators for cases involving the use of deadly force or in-custody deaths, restorative justice;*
- *Supports a properly funded and staffed the U.S. foreign service that promotes democracy and human rights around the world; Supports candidates who work to de-escalate tension especially in areas of conflict like Israel/Gaza, Sudan, Haiti, and other parts of the world through good faith negotiations and work for world peace; Endorse candidates who support the Democratic Party as it works to counter aggression by countries that violate the sovereignty of other countries and that fund and implement physical, cyber, and financial attacks on democracies and developing countries.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

I support the values listed above without exception. One specific example is that Brentwood is surrounded by farms that are primarily harvested by immigrant farm working families - often undocumented. I support Brentwood nonprofit Hijas del Campo in its work to assist these families and advocate for accessible and equitable resources for them. I have volunteered for this agency and financially supported its cause as well.

As a sister-in-law to both Jewish and Palestinian family members, I have personal connections and opinions related to the horrifying situation in Gaza. I do not support the killing of innocent people who have been victimized by leaders who seek power regardless of cost. As a City Council, we have supported human rights, peace, equity, and anti-racism on a local and global level, and continuously promote the diverse cultures and religions of Brentwood as equally valued in our community.

DPCCC Value: Education & Child Support Services

- *Advocates for high-quality, affordable child care; support programs for low income families including access to parks and job retraining; ensures educational materials (textbooks, library books) are inclusive, historically accurate, and reflect scientific consensus including age-appropriate, medically accurate sex/gender education; replacing sworn peace officers in schools with trained non-police personnel; Supports policies that respect students' civil rights related to gender expression and addresses issues like gender-based violence and harassment.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

The fact that in 2024 there is a surge of book burnings by groups that can't accept the harsh realities of our history, the fact that families do not always follow so-called traditional models, that gender expression doesn't necessarily align with gender assigned at birth, is appalling. Before I was on council, there was a "drag queen" reading event at our library. I am embarrassed to say that there was a small group of protestors outside of the library when this took place. Not only do we need to prioritize making sure all feel welcome and love is painted with a broad brush in our city, we need to stand against these discriminations when we witness them. As a nonprofit professional, I fully support whatever resources can help our low-income families to thrive and live safe and happy lives.

DPCCC Value: Seniors & Veteran Support Services

- *Supports the California Master Plan for Aging including dignified living at home housing options that are age, disability, and dementia-friendly; prioritize public housing initiatives over privatization for seniors and adults with disabilities; support retraining for those aged 55-65, and extend unemployment; oppose mandatory retirement; call for stronger oversight of reverse mortgage programs, rigorous prosecution of financial crimes against seniors; support comprehensive single-payer healthcare, with interim Medicare Part D reforms; support HICAP services, affordable mental healthcare including issues around isolation, quality caregiving, and increased funding for In-Home Supportive Services. Preserve programs like Adult Protective Services and home-delivered meals; advocate for the removal of the FICA income limit to strengthen Social Security and preserve pensions.*
- *Champions the needs of veterans and military families by promoting equitable treatment and benefits, access to education including tuition waivers and retraining, adequate healthcare funding including government assistance for those exposed to toxins; elimination of veteran homelessness, establishment of Veterans' Courts and justice programs and support independent investigations of claims of hazing, rape, sexual assault and harassment and that the military remove the chain of command from all investigations and prosecutions; support a path to citizenship for military service members, and protections against discrimination based on ethnicity, disability, gender identity, political affiliation, race, religion, or sexual orientation; oppose deportation of military personnel and limitations on citizenship for children of veterans who are born abroad.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

As the Executive Director for a nonprofit serving the rights, quality of life, and safety of older and dependent adults living in long-term care facilities, this question speaks to my heart and it speaks to my area of expertise. I sit on Master Plan for Aging Advisory Councils in two of the three counties my agency serves, and on the Age Friendly Council for the third. I have advocated for legislation and funding for this very vulnerable population at the city, county, state, and federal level. Seniors remain one of our most forgotten and brushed aside sections of our communities, and we need leaders that are committed to taking a stand on behalf of older adults who so frequently do not have a voice of their own. I am working on expanding our housing options in Brentwood for older adults and adults with disabilities. Our city has the largest number percentage of senior residents in East County, so this year I initiated our very first Aging and Disabilities Friendly Community Ad-Hoc Committee. It will become a standing committee in January, 2025.

Veterans have always held a special place in my heart, as I am the daughter, step-daughter, granddaughter, cousin, niece, etc., of family members who have served in the military. I make a point to always attend events that honor our military residents - past and current, and those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. Our local VFW works hand in hand with other veteran groups in the area and are very active in our community, with full city council support. I stand behind benefits that support all of the areas mentioned.

DPCCC Value: Affordable Housing & Environmental Protections

- *Supports eviction protections, rent control/stabilization, anti-harassment ordinances, and habitability protections; Supports zoning and housing policies that ensure sustainability and affordability, including infill and mixed-use developments that balance job opportunities with housing availability; Promotes the integration of green spaces and community gardens in all communities; Supports local authority in phasing out fossil fuel extraction and preventing the zoning of new extraction sites; Advocates for strong regulatory measures for setting science-based health and safety setbacks from residential areas for industrial sites, including oil and gas wells and toxic dump sites.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

Prior to my time on council, a very large number of housing developments in Brentwood were approved with ZERO affordable housing units. As soon as we knew we had a council majority who supported inclusionary affordable housing, we voted to remove the possibility of trading affordable units with in-lieu fees for developments over 9 units. We also increased our inclusionary affordable housing percentage to 13% and depending on how the election goes, I would like to take another stab at increasing that percentage again. We have a very large parcel designated/zoned for mixed use housing and jobs, and I am committed to breaking ground on this development in the coming years. Infrastructure is in the works and an anchor project recently started their build. Brentwood Council voted to ban oil & gas drilling within city limits. Council also worked with a resident initiative to get Measure Q on our 2022 ballot, which passed with a clear majority and will work to protect open space in our city.

DPCCC Value: Equality & Human Rights

- *Actively advocates for a just and inclusive society, speaking out against all forms of racism, discrimination, harassment, hatred, and violence; Supports movements and initiatives that address discrimination; Enforces policies that ensure equal opportunities and equal pay for equal work across genders, races, and abilities; Upholds the rights of transgender and gender non-conforming individuals for acknowledgment of their stated name, gender, and pronoun; Supports the use of gender-neutral language to foster an inclusive environment; Promotes the participation of women, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, and people of color in elected office and ensures access to facilities consistent with individuals' gender identity and disability access; Supports the right to free speech, ensuring it does not extend to discriminatory practices against any group based on race, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

From the time I was elected, I have been advocating for accessibility of our City Council meetings. When other cities removed the ability for the public to comment on agenda items via zoom, I pushed to make sure accessibility was considered, for older adults, adults with disabilities, those who don't drive at night, people with young children at home, and commuters. Unfortunately a majority of council felt compelled to vote against general public comments via zoom after Brentwood joined several other Bay Area cities and was "zoom bombed" by public commentators with hate speech. I hope to bring general comments back, but we continue to allow virtual comments on specific agenda items.

I mentioned in a previous answer that I initiated our city's first Age & Disabilities Friendly Ad-Hoc Committee earlier this year with a goal to make our city more accessible and to focus on more inclusive planning. Another council member initiated our city's first Diversity/Equity/Belonging/Inclusion Ad-Hoc Committee. Again, this committee will become a standing committee in January 2025. While I am a Caucasian woman, I asked to join this committee as an ally. We have already made progress in updating language in our ordinances to be more inclusive and are reviewing instituting DEI policies for the vendors with whom we work, among other things.

DPCCC Value: Healthcare & Reproductive Rights

- *Advocates for the preservation of rights under Roe v. Wade, guaranteeing confidential and unrestricted access to reproductive services without the need for consent or judicial intervention, ensuring continued coverage of all healthcare options; Works toward implementing a universal, single-payer healthcare system, while in the interim, seeking reforms to make Medicare Part D more affordable and accessible, including the ability for Medicare to negotiate drug prices.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

I fully support women having control of their reproductive healthcare, and have attended community meetings and donated in support of this preservation. I also support the idea of universal healthcare.

DPCCC Value: Economic Justice & Business Development

- *Support for Small Businesses and Entrepreneurship focusing on women, people of color, and those with limited entrepreneurship opportunities including veterans; Support the rights of employees to organize and Project Labor Agreements; Ensures a safe working environment free from harassment, intimidation, and retaliation; Advocates for the establishment of local banks and credit unions, limiting regressive financial operations like check cashing businesses and pawnshops; Promotes Project Labor Agreements to protect workers; Supports initiatives to counteract "food deserts" by developing local grocery stores and community gardens in underrepresented areas.*

Please expand on your stance and describe the potential impacts on the community that you seek to represent. *

I believe in workers' rights and protections. I would like to see fewer fast food restaurants in a section of Brentwood that has more dense zoning for this type of restaurant and is also home to many of our lower income residents. I would not support check cashing businesses and pawn shops coming to Brentwood. I hope to bring accessible community gardens to Brentwood's sphere of influence through our pending Agricultural Innovation Center.

Reminders:

* After submitting this questionnaire, please go and pay your endorsement application fee at:

<https://contracostadems.com/donate>

* Please direct questions to the Endorsements Committee Chair Tamela Hawley or Vice Chair Cameron Sasai at endorsements@contracostadems.com

* The DPCCC Code of Conduct: <https://contracostadems.com/about/code-of-conduct/>

* The CADEM Party Platform: <https://cadem.org/our-platform/>

If you like, you may submit a biography and/or resume in the section below. Not required.

 Add file

Submit Questionnaire

By submitting this questionnaire, I attest that the foregoing is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and to uphold the Code Of Conduct. <https://contracostadems.com/about/code-of-conduct/>

Thank you and good luck with your campaign! We will be in touch with you to schedule your interview time.

Interviews will be scheduled by District Directors.

By submitting this questionnaire, I agree to accepting the endorsement of the DPCCC if offered. *

Yes

No

I have paid my endorsement application fee: <https://contracostadems.com/donate/> *

Yes

No

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