

Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce Alderperson Candidate Questionnaire

Please tell us about yourself.

Your Name: *

Samba Baldeh

Aldermanic District: *

17

Current Home Address: *

5150 Crescent Oaks Dr, Madison, 53704

Email: *

[REDACTED]

Phone: *

[REDACTED]

Campaign website, if any:

Social media (Twitter, Instagram, etc.) handles, if any:

Past education and work history (question optional; alternately you may send résumé to brett@madisonbiz.com)

Will send resume

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Instructions: Please state your position on the following issues. Please limit answers to 100 words. Any answers exceeding the word count limitations will be cut after 100 words.

If you have filled out this questionnaire before, you may skip starred** questions or modify previous answers to those questions. If you skip starred answers on this questionnaire, we will re-publish your 2017 answers.

**1. Why are you seeking this office?

Continue my work on enhancing the quality of life for district residents. This includes development of a library/community services center. I have also made great efforts at providing residents an opportunity to be engaged on civic issues that impact their lives.

****2. What in your background or experiences qualifies you to understand the unique needs facing small businesses?**

I am the co-owner of a small business providing IT consulting services. We have also invested in and operated a restaurant that began from the ground up. As a project manager for American Family, I also interact with vendors as well as troubleshoot problems of our many small business customers.

****3. What are the most important issues the businesses in your district face?**

1. Fear of Crime. The fear of crime has had a very negative effect on East (and West) Towne. One crime can drive 1000 customers away. East Towne is the anchor for much of the East Wash business district. 2. Workforce. Workers may be available but getting folks "ready for work" is a challenge in terms of "soft" and hard skills. 3. Transportation. Improving public transportation to the East Towne area from around the city and Sun Prairie and transportation to SP.

****4. What is your perception of Madison's business brand? How do you think business in Madison is perceived locally, statewide, and nationally?**

Outside of the city, the brand is likely viewed as consisting of four giants: state government, UW, Epic and AmFam. Those are four good "brands."

****5. How can the City of Madison best attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce?**

We need a critical mass to "attract and retain a diverse and talented workforce." Obviously, we are not there for the city but there are businesses and sectors that have made more progress than others. People need to feel valued in the workplace and comfortable in the community as whole. The later may be the most difficult change.

6. How can the City of Madison build an inclusive economy and ensure the advanced industries accelerating here provide opportunity for all?

This is related to the above question/answer. One often missing piece is investment in training. This can be costly and in small businesses or industries, risky. Exact Inc., AmFam and at a smaller scale the City is engaged in training staff at the entry level. It will be interesting to see how many of those staff members are later engaged in their industries' most advanced levels of science and operation.

7. With Madison's economic momentum, a continued focus must be placed on infrastructure improvements. What strategies would you recommend for the city to meet the diverse needs of worker mobility and housing?

Regional transportation. Neither the city or "the market" will build tens of thousands of homes in the Madison area in the next 20 years to staff projected employment. Housing will be built where it is affordable. Having 10-20,000 more single-car commuters drive into the Isthmus or surrounding area every day is not sustainable.

8. How do you define economic development? Please elaborate.

I favor economic development that provides family-supporting employment that has a minimal "footprint"/impact on the environment.

9. The 115th Fighter Wing of the Air National Guard is an important driver of the Madison economy, providing an annual economic impact of over \$100 million, emergency and fire services for the Dane County Regional Airport, and over \$1 million in tuition assistance to area student guardsmen. Do you support the Wing as it seeks to continue its mission by acquiring next-generation F-35A jets? Please explain your answer.

I wrote a letter to the ANG, critical of their of lack of response to the contamination of Water Utility Well 15 with PFAS- a toxic chemical. I have asked them to define the contamination site and to work with the Water Utility Board to discuss mitigation strategies. They have not responded to my letter or one sent by Mayor Soglin. If the contamination persists or is worsened, it may cost millions of dollars for water filters. This will be a cost borne by all Madison Water Utility rate-payers

10. If offered an endorsement from the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, would you accept it? *

Yes

No

By submitting this candidate questionnaire, you agree that the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce may publish it with the intent of sharing it with its membership and the general public. *

I acknowledge that the Chamber will publish my answers to this questionnaire

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