

Candidate Questionnaire on Austin Energy Issues

Participating Organizations:

- Public Citizen
- SEED Coalition
- Sierra Club
- Solar Austin
- Texas ROSE (Ratepayers' Organization to Save Energy)
- Clean Water Action
- Austin Climate Action Network
- Texas Drought Project
- First Unitarian Universalist Green Sanctuary Ministry
- Wildflower Unitarian Universalist Church

Candidate Name: Valerie Menard

District: 1

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- 1. The mission of the Austin Energy Department is to deliver clean, affordable reliable energy and excellent customer service. During your term, what will be the most important challenge for the city in regard to Austin Energy?**

Keeping rates in check and improving service to Austin Energy customers.

- 2. From a citywide and district perspective, briefly describe your vision for managing and improving Austin Energy?**

I would oppose efforts to privatize Austin Energy. City Council must maintain oversight over such a basic quality of life component like a utility bill. I will refer to the report from the Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force as an outline for improving Austin Energy services citywide and in District 1.

- 3. What is your position on climate change?**

I believe it exists and that we all need to do what we can and encourage others to do so as well, to lower our carbon footprints.

- 4. Do you support implementation of the recommendations in the report developed by the [Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force](#) and are there any other specific changes you would like made to the Austin [Austin Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan to 2020](#)?**

I do support the Austin Generation Resource Planning Task Force report. What would you change and how? I think it's pretty thorough. Perhaps the only change or addition would be to set aside funds for a marketing campaign, especially to historically underserved communities, to educate Austin Energy customers about the wealth of rebate and incentive programs to reduce their utility bills and improve Austin's energy efficiency.

- 5. City Council serves as the board of directors for Austin Energy. As a council member, what do you consider your role to be in regard to Austin Energy's governance?**

City Council should continue its oversight of Austin Energy and my role will be to continue to move Austin toward renewable energy sources, e.g. solar, wind, and away from nonrenewable sources, e.g. coal, nuclear.

6. What renewable energy resources and programs should be incorporated into the Austin Energy generation resource mix?

Solar and wind.

7. How and to what extent should Austin Energy provide customer energy efficiency programs?

I support these programs but as mentioned previously, I'm not sure Austin Energy customers are aware of them. I would propose a marketing campaign, especially to underserved communities, to help educate them so that more take advantage of them.

8. What are your thoughts on whether Austin Energy should invest in more nuclear reactors and whether the utility should remain involved in the existing South Texas Project reactors after their currently scheduled retirement dates of 2027 and 2028 if they get relicensed for 20 additional years?

I would not support renewing involvement in the South Texas Project after its retirement dates.