

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

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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?**

To provide a growing Austin population with affordable and clean energy.

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

We need to rely on both Austin Energy and outside experts to address new energy developments so that we transition to reliable and renewable energy at a pace that keeps Austin at the forefront but while maintaining affordability. We also have a fiduciary responsibility to competitive contracting vs. sole source contracts to avoid committing to a too costly or unsustainable path with an unproven company.

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

Global trends provide evidence that climate changes are occurring. The new city council therefore needs to concern themselves with challenges of drought, flood control and the probability of increased energy demands.

- 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 Energy Resource, Generation and Climate Protection Plan to 2020](#)?**

Yes/none, though I would be cautious about mandating a date certain for closures, e.g. as there needs to be an affordable renewable energy producer in place.. What would you change and how?

- 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?**

Listen to their expertise, but seek advice of outside experts, too, in arriving at objective solutions. The above Task Force and their report is an excellent bench mark.

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

Solar appears ahead of wind power at this juncture, but both are needed to bridge weaknesses such as periods of calm winds or darkness. Improved storage capacity technology from each should allow greater reliance in the future.

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

As suggested in the AGRP Task Force report, allow additional resources for low income residents since they are unlikely to be able to make property improvement for energy efficiency. I also support customer energy efficiency incentive programs to encourage solar energy conversion which has high up front investment costs.

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?

No on nuclear reactors as I believe there are now safer and cheaper alternatives. However, the council should revisit this issue at the appropriate time should relicensing be under consideration.