

# 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:** Darrell Pierce

**District:** 8

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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?**

Ensuring we continue to invest in renewable sources for energy and explore other reliable clean energy alternatives while identifying strategies to reduce utility rates for consumers. Further, we should reprioritize utility charges to reflect actual services used and not other unrelated expenses.

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

To assist Austin Energy with becoming a best-in-class service provider, I will be committed to continuing to promote developing key goals, strategies, and service outcomes that can be measured and used towards improving the quality and cost of service provided to customers. In addition, I will continue to support Austin Energy's push towards identifying reliable clean alternatives and meeting/exceeding its renewable energy goals.

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

As it relates to Austin Energy, I believe climate change should always be considered as a factor when making decisions around determining what alternatives should be included in our portfolio of energy options and assist Austin Energy with being a leader on reducing climate change. I support Austin's Climate Protection Plan. I look forward to becoming a champion for the Community Plan within the ACPP designed to reduce CHG emissions from sources community-wide.

- 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](#)? What would you change and how?**

I support many of the recommendations and ideals outlined by the Task Force, and believe efforts should be made to build on their work by determining the reports technical and financial implications. I would be open to the recommendation to "replace the Decker Creek Power Plant with 600 MWs of West Texas solar PV before 2016" after better understanding the proposed cost, risk, and impact on our community. A more appropriate strategy would be to continue to identify reliable

clean energy alternatives that would put Austin Energy in a position to close Decker between 2016 and 2030. Recognizing the current Generation Task Force mission will be coming to a close soon, it would be appropriate for the new Council to form another task force to expand on the work they have created.

**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?**

As a Council Member, my role is to ensure that Austin Energy has the appropriate leadership, a stable rate structure/budget, adequate resources, and policies and strategic initiatives that provide the highest level of quality service for its customers and a dynamic work environment for its employees.

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

I support the current mix of renewable energy resources including wind farms, solar, solar small scale, and biomass.

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

Austin Energy should continue to provide a portfolio of energy efficiency programs to residential and commercial customers. In addition, Austin Energy should continue to evaluate and measure the impact of the programs and the return on the City's investment to ensure we are achieving the greatest impact possible.

**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?**

Austin Energy should continue to aggressively explore reliable clean alternatives and expand our renewable energy portfolio to reduce the need to make more additional investments in nuclear reactors.