**THE DOLPHIN DEMOCRATS**

**2016 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES**

NOTE TO CANDIDATES: The information you provide on this questionnaire will be posted on the Dolphin Democrats website and social media. Please include a recent photo of yourself to be posted with your questionnaire

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| Candidate Name: | Mitch Rosenwald |
| Office Sought: | Commissioner, Oakland Park |
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Please answer the following questions:

Are you a member of the Dolphin Democrats?

* Yes

Are you a member of the Florida LGBTA Democratic Caucus?

* No

Do you identify as LGBT?

* Yes

Are you a member of the Broward Democratic Executive Committee?

* No

Would you condemn instances of hate speech in your district?

* Absolutely! Hate speech may be Constitutionally-protected but I will call its advocates out on their small-mindedness.

Do you believe that a woman has the right to terminate her unwanted pregnancy? Please Explain.

* Yes, women have the right to terminate unwanted pregnancies though abortions should not be seen casually as “birth control”. It is a very difficult decision that should not be treated lightly. In the case, of health risk, incest, or rape, women should definitely have the right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy.

Have you ever registered to participate in a LGBT Pride parade (e.g. The Wilton Manors Stonewall Pride Parade)? If so, how many, when were they, and where were they held?

* I walked as part of Baltimore PRIDE’s festival years ago as a volunteer with the Gay and Lesbian Community Center.

Do you support legislation that would require background checks for all gun purchases?

* Absolutely – to me it is absurd that background checks are not fully mandated at this time.

Do you believe it should be illegal for anyone on the No-Fly list to purchase a gun?

* Absolutely

Would you support a policy that lease and event contracts include a prohibition that assault weapons may not be sold on your municipalities’ property at any event?

* Yes, there is no need at all for assault weapons to be purchased on any city property. Assault weapons should only belong in law enforcement’s/ military’s purview.

Do you support legislation to ban clips that hold more than ten rounds?

* Definitely.

Would you support non-discrimination legislation that would make it illegal to fire someone and/or deny them housing because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression?

* Yes, statewide, this civil right is long, long overdue. We are fortunate that Oakland Park, as well as Wilton Manors, have these protections in place.

Would you oppose legislation that restricts access to restrooms and other sex-segregated facilities for transgender persons?

* Yes, the current “scare” regarding transgender individuals’ access to the bathroom of their choice indicates a hysteria that should not be legislatively supported.

Do you support marriage equality for same-sex couples?

* Absolutely.

Do you support domestic partner benefits for unmarried public employees?

* Yes.

Would you oppose legislation allowing organizations or businesses to refuse service to LGBT persons based on personal or religious objections?

* Yes – using religion as a “cloak” for discrimination should not be given legislative legitimacy.

Would you support legislation to ban ‘conversion therapy’, a range of dangerous and discredited practices that falsely claim to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity or expression?

* Absolutely – all major health organizations - including the National Association of Social Workers of which I served as the Florida President - have stated that “conversion therapy” is dangerous.

Would you support legislation requiring fair and equal access to essential healthcare for transgender persons?

* Yes, this is crucial for promoting full civil rights.

Would you support efforts in our public schools to provide HIV/STI prevention education?

* Yes.

Do you support teaching comprehensive age-appropriate sex education programs in our public schools?

* Yes. Health education, at developmentally appropriate levels, is key to reducing STD’s as well as unwanted pregnancies.

Would you support legislation creating and regulating safe houses for sexually exploited youth?

* Yes, this is vital. In the past, I have collaborated with SunServe and other Broward Counties to write a federal grant to fund such a “safe space”.

Would you support legislation creating a Florida Human Trafficking Task Force including a coordinated reporting system and state hotline to report Human Trafficking in Florida?

* Yes – Florida has already created the Safe Harbor Act that has equipped the Department of Children and Families with more training and tools to screen, protect and assist youth who have been trafficked. There is even more progress to make.

Would you support legislation creating a statewide needle exchange program?

* Yes, needle exchange is an example of evidence-based “harm reduction” that should be allowed in Florida.

Do you support a municipal ordinance adding Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity as protected classes for employment, service, and housing in your municipality?

* Fortunately, this ordinance exists and should be maintained in Oakland Park. It should be expanded statewide.

Do you support gender identity being determined by the individual?

* Yes, this sense of identity and being is only determined by the individual.

Do you support requiring sensitivity training to address LGBT issues (which are very direly needed for our transgender municipal residents) for public safety employees in your municipality?

* This is essential.

Do you support a LGBT pride parade (late June) and a Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20th: for transgender around the world murdered every year because they are transgender) held in your municipality?

* Yes. We need parades - even in our land of LGBT-inclusion! I work at Barry University and we have had a very moving and successful Transgender Day of Remembrance for the past few years.

Do you support a living wage for all municipal employees?

* I do. I would need to review the budget and receive consultation before determining the living wage amount but somewhere between $12.00 and $15.00/hour is certainly reasonable for full-time employees to rise above the poverty level.

Do you support contracts that require competitive bidding also require the contractor to provide a living wage and healthcare benefits to all its employees doing work for your municipality?

* Yes. We need to ensure that our city contracts are “humanely” negotiated with respect to social justice.

Do you support requiring municipal contractors to provide a minimum of two weeks paid vacation to their employees who are doing work for your municipality?

* Yes, I do.

Do you support your municipal employees right to collective bargaining without any undue interference from your municipality?

* Yes. Unions have a long history in the United States. Collective bargaining is an important right and they have a right to form and organize without interference.

Do you support child care facilities in your municipality that provide child care services to single parents being partially government subsidized?

* I would like to ensure Oakland Park’s ability to be “parent-friendly” to its parent-employees. Yes, I am open to exploring a sliding-fee scale to lower-income single parents with childcare being partially subsidized by Oakland Park.

Do you support after school and sports programs being offered by your municipality?

* Absolutely – these extracurricular activities are key to youth’s development.

Do you support legislation requiring healthy food options at day care facilities and municipal after school/sports programs?

* Yes.

Do you support the right of the people to demonstrate peacefully in your municipality without complicated permits being required?

* Yes – we have the right to peacefully assemble. Due notice and permitting should be given to the city but it should not be a complex process.

Do you support religious exemptions for individuals providing services to the general public in a business to be able to discriminate in employment, housing, or service due to a sincerely held religious belief?

* No – religion should never be used as an “excuse” for prejudice. I am aware that there are some individuals who genuinely feel committed to a belief. However, when you are licensed by a city or state to provide a good or service, your ware should be available to all for purchase.

Do you support religious organizations who provide community services for the general public, funded by your municipality, still being able to administer those municipal programs if they refuse to provide those same services funded by your municipality to LGBT people?

* No – and this might be controversial as it might mean that there would be a temporary reduction or halt in services. But a city, Oakland Park in this example, should not legitimate an organization who, however well-intended, seeks to discriminate.

Do you support a moment of silence rather than a benediction preceding your meetings?

* Yes. We do not have a benediction before City Commission meetings. Moments of silence are the preferred mechanism for reverence in all public meetings, events, and ceremonies.

Would you be available to attend one of our meetings (7:30 pm, the second Wednesday of every month at The Pride Center 2020 N Dixie Hwy, Wilton Manors, FL 33305) where we consider endorsing you for the position you are seeking?

* Yes. I would be honored to be considered for Dolphin Democrats’ endorsement of my candidacy for Commissioner of the City of Oakland Park.