

2023 VOTING GUIDE

This voting guide will provide information about the candidates running for City Council and Mayor in Portland. It will also provide information about the referendum questions on the ballot for the City of Portland and the State of Maine.

Homeless Voices for Justice sent out a Candidate's Questionnaire to each of the candidates in early October. Those candidates who have answered the Questionnaire will have this indicated, and the Questionnaire responses will be attached sent to all staff via email.

All candidates for mayor have answered a variety of questions about homelessness through interviews in the Portland Press Herald throughout the past few months. Quotes from each of them on this topic will be included in the voting guide. The full articles about each of them will also be included.

Referendum questions will each have a brief description of the question and its impacts, as well as the language that will appear on the ballot regarding that particular question. Articles and links to more information about the State referendum questions will be linked in that section.

If you do not have access to the Portland Press Herald, please email Taylor Cray, Advocacy Supervisor, at tcray@preblestreet.org to be provided with a PDF version of the article.

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MAYOR

Andrew Zarro –

- Residence: Portland, Maine – Back Cove neighborhood.
- Political Party: Democrat.
- Education: University of Vermont (BA), Northeastern University (MA).
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Climate and Sustainability
 - Housing Affordability
 - Homelessness
 - City Infrastructure
 - Economic Development
 - Government Accessibility and Transparency
- [Press Herald Mayoral Profile](#)

Homelessness and Shelter (quotes from Portland Press Herald article, found here: [Portland's homelessness crisis poses serious challenges for mayoral hopefuls \(pressherald.com\)](#))

Should he become mayor, Zarro plans to build 100 efficient tiny homes that each could go up in a day. He modeled the proposal on one to house asylum seekers that the Greater Portland Council of Governments put forth about a year ago.

Zarro estimates that each unit would cost about \$44,000, paid out of the city's housing trust fund – which had nearly \$9 million at the start of August – or money the state set aside for building transitional and affordable housing.

The people living in those units, he said, would be provided, through the city's nonprofit partners, with support for problems including mental illness and addiction.

Mark Dion –

- Residence: Portland, Maine.
- Political Party: Democrat.
- Education: University of Southern Maine (BA), Antioch University New England (MA), University of Maine School of Law (JD)
- Description:
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Affordable Housing
 - Immigration

- Safety
- Government Relations
- [Press Herald Mayoral Profile](#)

Homelessness and Shelter (quotes from Portland Press Herald article, found here: [Portland's homelessness crisis poses serious challenges for mayoral hopefuls \(pressherald.com\)](#))

Mark Dion said he sees this as a "short-term crisis." If elected mayor, he would make it a priority to get people into shelters immediately, using the court system to compel people to move into shelters.

"We need some immediate solutions that may not be perfect but move to actually address the conditions we see in these encampments," he said.

Dion wants to charge people with minor crimes for public camping, disorderly conduct or drug use, then push the courts to drop the charges if those who have been charged agree to go into counseling, shelter, drug rehabilitation or other programs the court deems necessary.

"I wouldn't be looking at this as a way to convict people but as a way to leverage them to where they need to go," Dion said. "I don't want to face the possibility that they could freeze to death."

He said that sweeps of encampments will continue if he becomes mayor. He sees it as a public safety issue.

Pious Ali –

- Residence: Portland, Maine.
- Political Party: None Listed.
- Education: Institute for Civic Leadership (Lift360)
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Shared Economic Development
 - Support Education
 - Expanding Democracy
 - Access to Quality Housing
 - Protecting the Environment
- [Press Herald Mayoral Profile](#)

Homelessness and Shelter (quotes from Portland Press Herald article, found here: [Portland's homelessness crisis poses serious challenges for mayoral hopefuls \(pressherald.com\)](#))

Ali says as mayor he would prioritize working with – and funding – local nonprofits that provide housing-first units, mental health services and addiction counseling. He has his eye on the state opioid settlement money as potential funding for those services.

But Ali recognizes that the homeless population is not a monolith.

“Different groups have different needs and we need to tailor programs that will meet those different needs,” he said.

Ali would like to work with nearby cities and towns to find homeless Portlanders places to live because finding affordable housing in Portland is so hard.

He would not continue sweeps as mayor, he said, while he worked on these plans. But he would like to increase the police presence.

“We cannot sweep our way out of this. It’s a crisis we are having all over the country,” he said. “You sweep here, they’re just going to end up somewhere else.”

Justin Costa –

- Residence: Portland, Maine.
- Political Party: Democrat.
- Education: Wesleyan University (BA), University of Maine School of Law (JD)
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Affordable Housing
 - Education
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Economic Development
- [Press Herald Mayoral Profile](#)

Homelessness and Shelter (quotes from Portland Press Herald article, found here: [Portland’s homelessness crisis poses serious challenges for mayoral hopefuls \(pressherald.com\)](#))

Justin Costa said he also would continue the sweeps, citing public safety.

“It’s incredibly unsafe for the individuals that we claim to care about, and we need to be firm about winding these down,” Costa said.

But he has different ideas about how to ultimately get people into shelters.

“This is not going to be an issue you can arrest your way out of,” he said.

Costa said he would stick firmly to encampment sweep dates and ramp up outreach aimed at moving campers into rehab, shelters or anywhere warm. He would ask the state for support in the form of extra outreach workers. He also would reconsider expanding the Homeless Services Center’s capacity, which the council will take up for a third time its next meeting, on Nov. 13.

“The bottom line is I think that the city needs to have a plan,” Costa said. “At the end of the day, I’ll support anything that’s actually going to get five votes and get done.” He sees homelessness as both a short- and long-term problem. But, he says the long-term solutions, like building transitional housing, are years away.

Dylan Pugh –

- Residence: Portland, Maine.
- Political Party: Democrat.
- Education: College of the Atlantic (BA)
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Affordable Housing
 - Ending Homelessness
 - Economic Justice
- [Press Herald Mayoral Profile](#)

Homelessness and Shelter (quotes from Portland Press Herald article, found here: [Portland’s homelessness crisis poses serious challenges for mayoral hopefuls \(pressherald.com\)](#))

Pugh would like to build 500 additional housing first units. He says funding could come from a combination of existing emergency shelter funding and a new local corporate income tax.

“There is an enormous amount of revenue flowing through Portland, but we don’t have the ability to capture it right now,” he said.

Pugh would like the city to sanction an encampment somewhere on municipal land with bathrooms, dumpsters and clean drinking water.

“These are individuals who have been betrayed by people in power in a systematic way, probably throughout their whole lives. How are we going to expect people to go into a situation that is run by the city if their experience with the city has been having their belongings thrown in a dumpster or their house bulldozed?” Pugh said of the city shelter.

He also would bring in police, medics and social services to offer support and safety directly where people are camping. He says the sanctioned encampment would not permit drug use, but he would like to see the city open a safe-injection site somewhere nearby.

If elected mayor, Pugh said he would spend a lot of time at the sanctioned encampment himself.

“I want people to feel like they can trust the mayor and trust the city – and once you build that seed of trust, it grows,” he said.

CITY COUNCIL – DISTRICT 4

Anna Bullett –

- Residence: Portland, Maine – District 4.
- Political Party: Democrat
- Education: Johnson & Wales University, University of Maine
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Homelessness
 - Childcare Access
 - Fiscal Accountability
 - Racial Equity
 - Transportation
 - Trust in Government

Robert Cady –

- Residence: Portland, Maine – District 4.
- Political Party: Democrat
- Education: None Listed – Board-certified physician and eye surgeon.
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Affordable housing.
 - Encampments and unhoused.
 - Opioid crisis.
 - Arrival of asylum seekers.
 - Safeguard the environment.
 - Preservation of our neighborhoods.
 - Support teachers and improve educational quality.
 - City financial responsibility and accountability.

CITY COUNCIL – DISTRICT 5

Kate Sykes –

- Residence: Portland, Maine – District 5.
- Political Party: Democrat
- Education: Smith College, University of New Mexico
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Raise wages.
 - Keep tenants housed and rents stable.
 - Strengthen building and environmental codes.
 - Guard the right to individual privacy.
 - Support local taxation, lending, and investment strategies that redistribute wealth to the working class and build a more equitable and prosperous community.

Matthew Buonopane –

- Residence: Portland, Maine – District 5.
- Political Party: Democrat
- Education: Not Listed
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Building more housing while maintaining the integrity of our neighborhoods.
 - Providing effective pathways out of homelessness - especially through treatment of substance use disorder.
 - Assertively engaging our state leadership in the needs of Portland.
 - Safeguarding Portland's waterfront and peninsula from the effects of climate change.
 - Maintaining our local infrastructure and promoting public safety.
 - Limiting tax increases and their impact on strained households and fixed income earners.

CITY COUNCIL – AT-LARGE

April Fournier –

- Residence: Portland, Maine
- Political Party: Democrat
- Education: University of Maine
- Issues and Priorities:
 - Homelessness
 - Climate & Environment
 - Housing
 - Racial Equity & Social Justice

Bill Linnell –

- Residence: Portland, Maine
- Political Party: None Listed
- Education: Colby College
- Issues and Priorities:
 - None listed

CITY OF PORTLAND REFERENDUM QUESTIONS

Question A: An Act to Amend Portland's Rent-Control Ordinance –

An Act to Amend Portland's Rent-Control Ordinance will ensure that anyone with an ownership interest in nine or fewer rental units in the City of Portland will not be subject to the provisions of the city's rent control ordinance.

- *Do you favor the change in the city ordinance proposed by citizen petition as summarized below?*

Question B: An Act to Protect Tenants, Prevent Operation of Illegal Short-Term Rentals, and Prohibit Corporate and Large Landlords from Operating Short-Term Rentals –

An Act to Protect Tenants, Prevent Operation of Illegal Short-Term Rentals, and Prohibit Corporate and Large Landlords from Operating Short-Term Rentals strengthens tenant protections by prohibiting eviction of tenants for the purpose of immediate conversion to short-term rentals, by prohibiting affordable and workforce housing from being used as short-term rentals, and by ensuring that at least 97.5% of all rental units in the city are reserved for long-term tenants.

The Act institutes severe penalties for anyone operating an illegal short-term rental and incentivizes the city to prosecute repeat offenders. It also prohibits corporate owners and anyone owning more than 9 rental units (either long- or short-term) from registering new short-term rentals.

- *Do you favor the change in the city ordinance proposed by citizen petition as summarized below?*

STATE OF MAINE REFERENDUM QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1: An Act to Require Voter Approval of Certain Borrowing by Government-controlled Entities and Utilities and to Provide Voters More Information Regarding That Borrowing.

An act requiring the Office of the Maine State Treasurer to prepare a statement when certain government bodies seek more than \$1 billion in debt and to present that statement to voters regarding the estimated costs of the increased debt and any other issues the treasurer considers relevant.

- *Do you want to bar some quasi-governmental entities and all consumer-owned electric utilities from taking on more than \$1 billion in debt unless they get statewide voter approval?*

Press Herald Article: [Question 1: Voters would have a say in certain big spending \(pressherald.com\)](https://www.pressherald.com/question-1-voters-would-have-a-say-in-certain-big-spending)

QUESTION 2: An Act to Prohibit Campaign Spending by Foreign Governments and Promote an Anticorruption Amendment to the United States Constitution.

An act requiring news outlets, including newspapers and television broadcasters, cable and satellite television broadcasters, and social media companies, to establish due diligence policies to ensure that campaign ads comply.

- *Do you want to ban foreign governments and entities that they own, control, or influence from making campaign contributions or financing communications for or against candidates or ballot questions?*

Press Herald Article: [Question 2: What you need to know about the foreign campaign spending ban \(pressherald.com\)](https://www.pressherald.com/question-2-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-foreign-campaign-spending-ban)

QUESTION 3: An Act to Create the Pine Tree Power Company, a Nonprofit, Customer-owned Utility.

Pine Tree Power would be regulated by the Maine Public Utilities Commission and governed by a seven-person board of directors, who would be elected by Mainers and then would appoint six others. The board would hire a third-party operator to oversee the day-to-day management

of the grid – the power lines that bring electricity from transmission stations to homes and businesses. Neither CMP nor Versant would be eligible to bid on the third-party contract.

- *Do you want to create a new power company governed by an elected board to acquire and operate existing for-profit electricity transmission and distribution facilities in Maine?*

Press Herald Article: [Question 3: What you need to know about the Pine Tree Power referendum \(pressherald.com\)](https://www.pressherald.com/question-3-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-pine-tree-power-referendum/)

QUESTION 4: An Act Regarding Automotive Right to Repair.

An act requiring manufacturers to give vehicle owners and independent shops the same access to their diagnostic tools that they give to their authorized repair shops, including software, information, capabilities, tools, parts and miscellaneous components. It also would standardize the digital platform owners and repair shops use to access this information. Additionally, the measure would require car manufacturers to keep a vehicle’s on-board diagnostics system within the vehicle, rather than limiting it to a wireless program.

- *Do you want to require vehicle manufacturers to standardize on-board diagnostic systems and provide remote access to those systems and mechanical data to owners and independent repair facilities?*

Press Herald Article: [Question 4: What you need to know about the right-to-repair referendum \(pressherald.com\)](https://www.pressherald.com/question-4-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-right-to-repair-referendum/)

QUESTION 5: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine Regarding the Timing of Judicial Review of the Determination of the Validity of Written Petitions.

A resolution expanding the maximum time allowed for the Secretary of State’s Office to review whether a citizen’s petition has enough valid signatures to qualify for a ballot and for the courts to review any challenges. Extending the deadline from 100 calendar days to 100 business days from the date of filing provides about 40 additional calendar days.

- *Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to change the time period for judicial review of the validity of written petitions from within 100 days from the date of filing to within 100 business days from the date of filing of a written petition in the office of the Secretary of State, with an exception for petitions filed within 30 calendar days before or after a general election?*

Press Herald Article: [Questions 5 through 8: What you need to know about the proposed constitutional amendments \(pressherald.com\)](https://www.pressherald.com/questions-5-through-8-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-proposed-constitutional-amendments/)

QUESTION 6: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Require All Provisions in the Constitution to Be Included in the Official Printing.

A resolution repealing language in the Maine Constitution that requires Sections 1, 2 and 5 of Article X to be omitted in official printed copies even though they were never repealed. Sections 1 and 2 contain details pertaining to the convening of the first Maine Legislature in 1821, including a schedule for its election and convening and special terms of office for elected officials. Section 5 includes the rights and obligations of Maine and Massachusetts relating to separation, including tribal obligations.

- *Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to require that all of the provisions of the Constitution be included in the official printed copies of the Constitution prepared by the Secretary of State?*

Press Herald Article: [Questions 5 through 8: What you need to know about the proposed constitutional amendments \(pressherald.com\)](https://www.pressherald.com/questions-5-through-8-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-proposed-constitutional-amendments/)

QUESTION 7: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Align the Proceedings for Circulating Written Petitions for People's Vetoes and Direct Initiatives with Federal Law.

A resolution removing a provision requiring circulators of petitions for a citizen's initiative or people's veto effort to be a resident of Maine and registered to vote in the state. This resolution is in response to a ruling in a 2020 federal court case that says the residency and registration requirements may no longer be enforced.

- *Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to remove a provision requiring a circulator of a citizen's initiative or people's veto petition to be a resident of Maine and a registered voter in Maine, requirements that have been ruled unconstitutional in federal court?*

Press Herald Article: [Questions 5 through 8: What you need to know about the proposed constitutional amendments \(pressherald.com\)](https://www.pressherald.com/questions-5-through-8-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-proposed-constitutional-amendments/)

QUESTION 8: RESOLUTION, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Maine to Allow Persons Under Guardianship for Mental Illness to Be Electors.

A resolution removing a provision stating that people under guardianships because of mental illness are not qualified to vote for state offices. This resolution follows a federal lawsuit from the year 2002 that challenged the provision under the U.S. Constitution and federal Americans with Disabilities Act. The court ruled in 2001 in favor of the plaintiffs, and as a result the state no longer enforces the restriction.

- *Do you favor amending the Constitution of Maine to remove a provision prohibiting a person under guardianship for reasons of mental illness from voting for Governor, Senators and Representatives, which the United States District Court for the District of Maine found violates the United States Constitution and federal law?*

Press Herald Article: [Questions 5 through 8: What you need to know about the proposed constitutional amendments \(pressherald.com\)](https://www.pressherald.com/2021/09/01/questions-5-through-8-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-proposed-constitutional-amendments/)

WHERE TO VOTE IN PORTLAND

Not sure where you're located? Look up your address here: [Maine.gov: Government: eDemocracy: Voter Information Lookup](#)

District 1:

1-1: East End School, 195 North Street

1-2: Merrill Auditorium Rehearsal Hall, 20 Myrtle Street

1-3: Peaks Island Community Center, 129 Island Ave, Peaks Island

District 2:

2-1: Reiche Elementary School, 166 Brackett Street

2-2: Portland Exposition Building, 239 Park Ave

District 3:

3-1: Woodfords Congregational Church, 202 Woodford Street

3-2: Italian Heritage Center, 40 Westland Ave

District 4:

4-1: St. Pius Church, 492 Ocean Ave

4-2: First Baptist Church, 360 Canco Road

District 5:

5-1: Deering High School Gym, 370 Stevens Ave

5-2: Grace Baptist Gym, 472 Summit Street