



February 2019

Candidate for Election: City of Gainesville Mayor

Note: Responses Will be Made Public. Please limit your response to 100 words (the published response will be cut off at the limit).

1. Candidate's Name: Lauren Poe
2. Email Address: poeformayor@gmail.com
3. Campaign Website: laurenformayor.com
4. Education: BA in History and M.Ed. in Secondary Social Sciences from the University of Florida.
5. Occupation: Mayor of City of Gainesville and Professor of Government & Economics at Santa Fe College
6. Employer: City of Gainesville and Santa Fe College
7. Previous Employment: Ft. Clarke Middle School
8. Three Qualities Leaders Must Possess and Why:
 1. Service over self. A leader of any organization must put the needs of the many above the needs of the self. The mayor is a servant, not a savior.
 2. Listen and process. On any given day the city commission will make big decisions on utility issues, water standards, or development projects. It is important to seek the advice of others, especially those with different backgrounds and experiences. As I like to remind myself, if you are the smartest one in the room, you are in the wrong room!
 3. Accountably. The decisions the city makes has an impact on thousands of people. We don't always get it right, so we need to use those experiences to learn, grow, and be better prepared for the next challenge.



9. Civic Involvement: Right now, mayoring, teaching, husbanding and fathering. In the past: Board of Directors for Peaceful Paths, Chair and board member of Citizens Advisory Committee for Community Development, Santa Fe Faculty Senate Executive Council, volunteer at several elementary schools, volunteer for several political campaigns.

10. Board(s) I've Served and What Prompted Me to Serve on Them: Peaceful Paths, because I believe in their mission to help every victim of domestic violence; Citizens Advisory Committee for Community Development, because it was a great way to serve our community while getting to better know so many of our community organizations helping people live better lives.

11. Have you ever served in elected public office? If yes, how many years total have you served in elected public office?
Gainesville City Commission District 2: 2008-2011
Gainesville City Commission At-Large: 2012-2016
Mayor: 2016-2019

12. Why are you running for this office?
Duty. I am a mission-driven person, and I want to invest my time and energy into improving our city for every resident. I want to face, head-on, the significant racial and economic disparities we have had for generations in our city. I want to leave my city in better shape than I found it. I do not want to ever look back and think, "I could have done more..."



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13. What do you perceive are the three most important concerns facing the City of Gainesville and what would be your top priorities, if elected?

The greatest issues facing Gainesville are racial and economic disparity, improving our quality of life and the creating greater economic opportunity for all residents. If re-elected, I look forward to building on the progress made during my first term to reduce disparities identified in the Friendship 7 report, improve mobility across our city, expand affordable housing and foster a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem. We need to protect our quality of life by protecting our environment, our local arts organizations while also partnering with others to address the deep-rooted inequities in our city.

14. The recent racial inequity study documented significant achievement and opportunity gaps in our community. In your opinion, what are the top two factors that contribute to this gap and what steps would you take to address those?

The single largest contributor to these disparities is poverty. In order to alleviate poverty, we must foster a more vibrant economy consisting with living wage jobs and employment options for people of all skill levels. The second root cause is school readiness and preparation. As a teacher, I know the disadvantage many of our children have even when entering kindergarten. The city is working to partner with our schools, private providers and others to do what we can to make sure every child is ready to learn when they enter school and is strongly supported through graduation.

15. Limited transportation options contribute to our well-documented equity gaps. What ideas do you have to help citizens get where they need to go?

The City of Gainesville has and will continue to invest in solutions for improving transportation equity. RTS has been improving bus routes by expanding routes into underserved areas of our city and will continue to do so, we also have created a new on-demand shuttle service for underserved areas in East Gainesville, wherein residents can be picked up at their homes. We have increased funding for road maintenance tenfold, the Vision Zero



initiative to work towards zero road deaths by 2025 and partnered with UF, FDOT, BMW and Audi to develop predictive analytics and safer roads.

16. What do you feel the City's economic development priorities should be over the next four years?

Since becoming mayor we have seen tremendous growth in Gainesville's economy. We have added more than 600 new businesses, over 11,000 new jobs and our unemployment rate has dropped by 42%. The city needs to continue to support local business owners through programs like the Gainesville Entrepreneurs and Adversity Program (GEAP), we need to develop ways to incentivize equitable development in areas of our city which are in the most need, and continue to build our partnerships with UF, Santa Fe, local businesses and nonprofits. Finally, we need to continue to foster a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem and retain more of our talent right here where they can grow and thrive.

17. Discussions surrounding GRU dominated many conversations in the past year. What would you say are the most significant issues facing the utility today? What changes would you make?

We need to work on diversifying our revenue stream, so we can take some of the rate pressure off of our residents and businesses. One opportunity includes negotiating a long-term contract with the University of Florida, a very real possibility. I believe we can put together a very competitive offer while allowing UF to keep their money and investment in our community local. We also need to look at broadband access as a potential new revenue source, improving cost and quality for our residents while bringing in new revenue for the utility.

18. Why should members of the business community support your candidacy?

We all believe in a greater Gainesville, a Gainesville that works for everyone. I have shown the leadership and dedication to build consensus, tackle the hard challenges and work collaboratively to accomplish our mutual goal of a world-class city in which every resident has their opportunity matched by their outcomes.



I hereby certify to the veracity and completeness of the information herein and that no other party other than myself completed this questionnaire.

Original or Electronic Signature

Lauren Poe

Gainesville Mayor