

2017 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Stephanie	L	Bowman

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

Port of Seattle Commission Position #3

3. Are you the incumbent? **Yes**

4. How long have you resided in this district/city? **I've lived in Seattle for 26 years**

5. How long have you resided in King County? **26 years**

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? **Nonpartisan**

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name:	Friends of Stephanie Bowman
Address:	PO Box 23011
City/State/Zip:	Seattle WA 98102
Campaign Phone:	206-898-3043
Campaign E-mail:	Stephanie.bowman10@gmail.com
Campaign Website:	www.BowmanforPort.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Port of Seattle Commission Position #3	Elected	2013 - present	President for two of the four years
Port of Seattle Commission Position #3	Appointed	2013	n/a

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
Washington State Legislature, House of Representatives, District 11	2012

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
- **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
- **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
- **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?

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1. **In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)**

Our region is facing an existential crisis in the loss of our middle class and ability of residents to fully participate in our economy and civic life; I am running for Port Commissioner because I believe the Port of Seattle is in a truly unique position to address this crisis. Locally based, world-class industry innovators such as Amazon, Microsoft and Expedia are models of creativity, inspiration and paradigm-shifting, systemic problem-solving, and have created unprecedented wealth for thousands of individuals. Yet at the very same time these industries have grown and prospered, we as a region are experiencing an equally unprecedented rise in income and educational disparities for residents who are not a participant in the high-tech sector. This economic inequality has resulted in an unacceptable loss of opportunity for residents – to own a home, to obtain advanced education, to engage as equals in community and fully participate in civic life.

The Port of Seattle, more than any other local public agency, is in a unique position to counter this economic inequality by providing opportunities to ensure our region has a middle class by reversing this trend toward a bifurcated community made up of high-income, high-tech jobs and low-income, service industry jobs. The Port has the ability to invest in physical infrastructure where the private sector can't or won't, in facilities that are the integral to our region and state's economy: in marine cargo terminals, Sea-Tac International Airport, Fisherman's Terminal, and individual projects throughout King County. Equally as important, the Port can and should invest in human capital - workforce development programs, apprenticeships and internships, for instance – that are essential to ensuring the opportunities created by the Port are equitable and accessible to all residents throughout the region. In many cases, the jobs resulting from these investments are an individual's first point of entry in participating in the workforce, or provide the security of job with an income that allows them to stay the middle class.

When viewed through this lens, the role of Port Commissioner is not only one of being a steward of the public's assets, but equally of creating opportunities that result in more equitable and just community. I believe that by serving as Port Commissioner it is my duty to use this position to ensure the Port is fully engaged in creating the economic circumstances that provide economic opportunities for all residents to prosper. The ability to have such a profound positive impact on the future of our region is my motivation for running for this position.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

The three most important traits I bring to public service, and which I believe are essential to serving as a Port Commissioner, are:

(1) Integrity: I am honest, with a strong moral compass about right and wrong, and my decisions and actions are on the Port Commission are made through a lens of what is in the best interest of the public rather than my own interests;

(2) Inclusivity: I actively seek and weigh other viewpoints and opinions prior and in order to make decisions, particularly those who may not traditionally be heard, or differ from my own perspective.

(3) Committed / work hard: I give 100% to my work on behalf of the Port and the residents of King County. I consider it a great honor and responsibility to serve as a Port Commissioner, and am tenacious in making the most of my time of service. Through focus and hard work, I am proud of what I have been able to accomplish on behalf of the Port in the last four years.

3. **Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.**

There are several accomplishments of which I am particularly gratified to have had a leadership role in since serving as a Port of Seattle Commissioner. First, I was honored to lead the effort on behalf of the Port of Seattle to help negotiate the creation of the Northwest Seaport Alliance, which is the formal partnership between the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma to jointly manage the marine cargo terminals in both harbors under a single, regional entity. As most are aware, the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma competed for decades for marine cargo customers, in a downward spiral which was leading to the loss of cargo volume – and jobs - to other west coast ports, and reduced revenue available for re-investment into the facilities at both harbors. As a resident and in my capacity as Port Commissioner, I believed that, regardless of how intransigent this issue had been over the years, it was absolutely essential for the region and the state that we address it. With my colleague Commissioner Clare Petrich at the Port of Tacoma, we led the negotiations between the two ports for 18 months and hundreds of hours, bringing our colleagues along by addressing their individual concerns, and balancing those with the broader interest of the region in seeing the ports collaborate instead of compete. Since no other ports in the country have ever tried to consolidate, we were in uncharted territory, which required us to explore dozens of different, complex governing and operational models for bringing together two regional governments, responsible to residents in two counties with very different constituents. The formal agreement was signed between the two Ports less than two years after I took office, and is now a national model both for how public ports can work together for the greater good of the public they serve, and for putting regional interests ahead parochial local interests can be accomplished.

Another accomplishment of which I'm proud to have led was the effort to substantially expand the Port of Seattle's investment in every city we serve through the creation of a program which supports local economic development efforts in 38 of the 39 cities in King County (City of Seattle is not eligible for this program). When I took office in 2013 I committed to personally visiting all 38 cities in our Port district (and have done so at least two times over the four years in office); in doing so I learned first-hand from Mayors and constituents about local needs to improve their communities. I believe firmly that because the Port of Seattle's boundaries are countywide, every community should benefit from our work, not just those where the Port operates facilities. This collaborative program has led to a formal partnership with all 38 cities and fantastic investments in local, community-based projects such as "Innovation Triangle" in Kirkland / Bellevue / Redmond, to the "Savor Snoqualmie" destination tourism effort. Just as importantly, however, this program and outreach effort has resulted in cities realizing more direct benefit from the Port, and residents feeling more connected to the elected officials which represent them on the Port Commission.

Last but certainly not least, in my role as the Executive Director of Washington ABC (WABC), a statewide non-profit working on poverty alleviation, I was proud to be a leader in the "small but mighty" effort that defeated legislation to expand payday lending practices in Washington in 2014. Although the massively funded payday lending industry had been working on this issue for over a year and had initially recruited a majority of bi-partisan support in both chambers of the Legislature, our tiny band of non-profit organizations (Northwest Justice Project, Statewide Poverty Action Network and my organization) was able to defeat this predatory lending proposal without any financial resources on our side. Instead, working collaboratively, we organized a citizen-led, grassroots network of diverse advocates from across the state, and used earned and social media to spread our message about the devastating effects of payday lending on the most vulnerable populations in our state. It was a great example of how ordinary people, working together for the common good, really can affect positive change in a community, even against well-funded, established industry interests.

4. **Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.**

I believe firmly that all of my professional work and community engagement over the last 20+ years has, in one way or another, contributed to my ability to be effective in public service. In terms of professional skills, I've worked in public policy for over twenty years on the local, state and federal levels, in the public, private and non-profit sectors (please see my resume for more details). This breadth of experience has provided me with a comprehensive understanding of how government works at all levels and intersects with various constituencies, including business, labor, environmental and social service communities. This has been especially helpful in my role on the Port of Seattle Commission, where, in order to be effective, the Port must work collaboratively with other governments and balance our decisions with inputs from all parts of the community.

Prior to joining the Port Commission in 2013, I served as the federal government affairs director for the Port of Tacoma (2006-2011). In this role I saw first-hand the negative effects of the competition between the Ports of Seattle and Tacoma; insights from that work were absolutely integral to negotiating the formation of the Northwest Seaport Alliance: I understood first-hand the culture concerns of Pierce County in relinquishing autonomy of their Port; I had the trust of the Port of Tacoma Commissioners, and I also understood, from the perspective of a former staff person, the practical challenges we faced in creating a single, new regional entity.

Since 2011 I have served as the Executive Director of Washington ABC (WABC), a statewide non-profit organization which works on poverty alleviation through policies and programs that help low and moderate income families invest in assets such as homeownership, education, personal savings and entrepreneurship. While one might not immediately see a connection between this work and the Port, in fact philosophically both the Port of Seattle and WABC are aligned in their over-arching missions of helping communities build assets that provide economic stability and allow residents to prosper. As the only Port Commissioner working in the non-profit sector with low-income populations, I bring a unique perspective to the Port in terms of understanding how the Port's work must be inclusive, must help marginalized communities to grow, and how the Port can play a significant role in creating jobs that help residents move into the middle class. My leadership on the Port Commission in expanding the Port's investments in job-training, apprenticeship and internship programs is but one outcome of how my professional work has helped me to be a better Commissioner.

In addition to my professional work experience, I have been actively involved in my community in a variety of ways over the last twenty years, including serving on the Boards of Plymouth Housing Group, the Rainier Valley Food Bank, P-Patch Trust, and an active member of my neighborhood community council.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

At the heart of it, the role of a Port Commissioner is to be steward of the public's assets. I believe this is our most important duty. Washington's ports are public agencies, and the elected Commissioners' role is to ensure the public's interests are being represented in decisions made on behalf of the Port. This includes not only a fiduciary responsibility to manage the assets on behalf of the residents of King County and the state, but also responsibility for environmental and social impacts of the Port's actions.

On a strategic level, Port Commissioners are responsible for establishing policy guidelines for the executive and staff to enact, and then monitoring those guidelines to ensure the direction given by the Commission is being implemented. The Commission needs to remain vigilant in ensuring the policy goals are being carried out, and be engaged to course-correct quickly if it is not.

On a tactical level, Port Commissioners are responsible for hiring and overseeing the chief executive, and for passing an annual budget. The Port of Seattle Commission has enacted bylaws which require the Commission to approve expenditures over \$300,000, so we have direct oversight of public funds.