



Questions for Pittsburgh City Council District candidates:

1. HUMANE ACTION Pittsburgh is seeking to shape Pittsburgh into ‘America’s Model Humane City’. This means participating in an open dialogue on animal protection, working to end animal cruelty for all animals and passing protective legislation where needed.

What are your plans to protect animals and can you support our goals to make Pittsburgh America’s Model Humane City?

Answer: **As the city moves into the future, we need to make sure that it remains the most livable city for everyone, no matter if they are 2 or 4 legged! If elected, I would support the work that Humane Action has done to ban the use of cruel weapons in the circus, end trapping, and close puppy mills. I will continue to follow the leadership of people like Natalie Ahwesh and Brian Bonsteel, who are selflessly spearheading a change to the status quo.**

2. The resilience strategy “ONEPgh” calls for a 50% reduction of the meat consumed in our city by 2030. This is in keeping with the United Nations recommendation to combat climate change, which states: The #1 corrective action is to greatly reduce or give up meat entirely. This is more impactful to the environment than discontinuing the use of cars and airplanes altogether.

What are your plans to protect animals and the environment through meat reduction?

Answer: **As a councilman, I plan to be an advocate for meat reduction efforts such as “Meatless Mondays.” The biggest obstacle facing such efforts is that they are under-advertised and people are unaware of them. Once elected, I will lead an education campaign for Meatless Mondays, maintain farmer’s market subsidies, and continue to make sure that folks within the city can meet their dietary needs, without meat.**

3. Plastic pollution is a growing problem worldwide, and in the city of Pittsburgh. HAP’s “*no plastic please*” campaign works to end single-use plastic wherever possible. We also encourage people to examine their dietary choices as approximately half of the plastic in the ocean is from commercial fishing.

What are your plans to reduce or eliminate plastic use in the City of Pittsburgh?

Answer: **The City should take the lead on banning single use plastics in their facilities and at their events. Additionally, as Councilman, I will investigate new policies such as Illinois's garbage bag tax to determine the potential fiscal and environmental impacts. I would consider pilot programs such as creating tax incentives for businesses that had**

sustainable practices within the city. However as stated in the question above, I believe I could help as an advocate by educating more residents to work to examine their dietary choices.

4. Our city has one of the worst wildlife trapping policies, meaning highest kill rate, for a city of our size in the United States. Residents have become used to calling Animal Care & Control to trap groundhogs, raccoons and skunks which must then be euthanized at tax payer expense. For the most part, trapping is a temporary solution as other animals will fill the void, leading a cycle of trapping and killing.

Will you prioritize an education campaign for Pittsburgh residents that separates wildlife myth from reality and support a policy change to reduce the amount of needless trapping?

Answer: **Absolutely, however this is only a temporary solution. In my role as an educator and advocate, I would look to minimize trapping within the city of Pittsburgh. I worry about the amount of trappings of non-target animals that happen within the city, as these numbers are not reported. Any policy or advocacy campaign that would help, I would support.**

5. The Pittsburgh Zoo is currently ranked the #2 Worst Zoo in the County for elephants. They are in violation of their lease with the City of Pittsburgh for failing to maintain AZA accreditation. Further, no satisfactory answer has been received from the Zoo or the City as to whether the Zoo is following city law, which bans the use of bullhooks and other instruments of pain on elephants.

What are your plans to ensure the Pittsburgh Zoo follows city law and regains their AZA accreditation?

Answer: **I would look to ensure that the zoo is fully following the bullhook ban and push to hold them fully accountable for their obligations. Additionally, while the Zoo can play many roles in the conservation of animals, I think the public needs to be educated on concerns surrounding the Zoo, such as its lack of AZA accreditation, which will add further pressure for accountability. I will challenge the subsidies the city is providing the zoo (property tax, water, etc...) while it is still treating animals inhumanely.**

6. Please let our members know what you have done in the past to protect animals.

Answer: **Caring for animals is an important part of my value system. I pass these values on to my children, teaching them to treat all living creatures with compassion and care. As Councilman, I would look forward to serving as a role model and an advocate for policies that protect animal welfare.**