



Women's Democratic Club of Utah

Response Date: 8/30/2023

Status:

Submitted

Your response:

Name

Ross C. "Rocky" Anderson

Email

rockyanderson.justice@gmail.com

Phone

3852340489

Are you a member?

Yes

Democrat?

Yes

ERA Support?

Yes

What office are you running for?

Salt Lake City Mayor

Primary?

No

First Time THIS Office?

No

Comments: I ran for, and won, the election for Salt Lake City Mayor in 1999. I then ran for, and won, re-election as SLC Mayor in 2003.

Re-election?

No

Comments: Strictly speaking, I am running for "re-election," since I've served for two terms before, but I checked the "No" box because of the parenthetical above referencing a "currently elected official."

Previous Experience?

I ran and won a primary race to become the Democratic candidate for Congress in Utah's Second Congressional District in 1996. I lost the general election. I ran and won a primary race for Salt Lake City Mayor in 1999, then won the general election by a 20% margin. Then I ran for re-election as SLC Mayor in 2003 and won. I didn't run for a third term (until now). I was the Justice Party candidate for President in 2012. I ran, and carried on a national campaign, to raise awareness about, and to try to move the two major parties toward progress on, issues such as universal health care, campaign finance reform, human and civil rights (particularly accountability for torture and illegal surveillance), and reform of laws relating to financial institutions (such as a restoration of the Glass-Steagall restrictions on the concentration of investment and commercial banks and insurance companies).

WHY are you running?

I'm running for office in large part because of the need for effective leadership in dealing with Salt Lake City's homelessness and affordability crises. I would eliminate homeless encampments throughout the city by providing an alternative temporary sanctioned camp

(with showers, property lockers, meals, and outreach/case management to help people transition to housing, jobs, and appropriate treatment), as well as adequate shelter for unsheltered people. I will formulate a plan, following collaboration by all relevant parties, for a campus where all homeless programs and facilities will be in close proximity to one another. Unfortunately, when the current mayor was a member of the City Council, the Council settled for three much smaller shelters to be "scattered" away from where other homeless services are available, with a net loss of almost 400 beds when the Road Home shelter was closed. That was a recipe for disaster, which has been badly exacerbated. During the past two years, the mayor, then the Council (at the mayor's behest), placed a moratorium on any additional permanent shelters in SLC and failed even to provide adequate shelter for hundreds of unsheltered people who were left with no option other than being in the freezing weather, resulting in the deaths of several people and numerous amputations of fingers, toes, and limbs suffered by people suffering from frostbite because of lack of any shelter for them. When I was mayor, we never left anyone in the cold (or the searing heat of summers, for that matter) without adequate shelter. In fact, we provided a 450 bed overflow shelter for homeless people during the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. (See <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2002-jan-31-mn-25711-story.html>) When I was mayor, we began providing supportive permanent housing for chronically homeless people with the 100-unit Sunrise Metro. From there, governmental entities, philanthropists, the LDS Church, and others went into full-gear and provided many hundreds of units of housing, leading Utah to be seen as an example for the rest of the nation as to how chronic homelessness could be nearly eliminated.

<https://www.npr.org/2015/12/10/459100751/utah-reduced-chronic-homelessness-by-91-percent-heres-how> Then, tragically, the progress came to an end. We can do it again, with good management of homeless facilities and full accountability to the public. I'm also running to effectively deal with the crisis in SLC regarding affordable housing. We need to end the subsidization of millions of dollars to private, profit-driven developers, who are constructing primarily unaffordable (and often architecturally awful) apartment buildings. Instead, the city should recognize its responsibility to provide plentiful, truly affordable housing for people at all income levels--and not just those at the 80%-of-area-median-income level, as the city is mostly focused on. The city itself should build and retain ownership in mixed-income, architecturally outstanding affordable housing, where rental rates can be much lower because of the elimination of a profit motive. This has been done with great success in many other areas of the world, including in some U.S. cities. (See, e.g., <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/23/magazine/vienna-social-housing.html> and <https://prospect.org/infrastructure/america-needs-social-housing/>.) I would also reform the culture of the SLCPD, providing the leadership at the police department that will insist on accountability for abuses (e.g., the shooting of an autistic boy in the back) or failures to perform the duties of first-responders (e.g., the failure to render aid for a black man bleeding to death, using the excuse that an ambulance was on the way). Police officers should be allowed to do their jobs and enforce the laws, then we should apply the principles of restorative justice to focus on problem-solving (e.g., mental health and drug treatment) rather than punishment and retribution.

About your race?

Our campaign, as with all of my past campaigns, is primarily grassroots oriented. Dozens of passionate, diverse people work hard, walking door-to-door with me (for more than six months so far), attending and working at events, and doing tasks at our campaign headquarters to keep the campaign moving forward. Our "ground game" is exceptional, as reflected by the ubiquitous yard signs in every part of the city. We're raising funds that will be adequate to aggressively communicate our positive message regarding the need for major changes and my record of successful, passionate advocacy that reflects shared values with most of Salt Lake City voters, including my decades-long work on environmental matters and in the human and civil rights field, generally, and in support of LGBTQ+ and women's rights, specifically. Our web site and social media posts provide a broad range of substantive information about my record, my positions, and my approach to public service. They also reflect endorsements by people who have tremendous influence in every area of our community and provide materials reflecting the clear comparisons between Mayor Mendenhall and me on several major issues, as well as our records of achievement. I'm looking forward to several debates with Mayor Mendenhall and numerous other events that will enable me to speak with many people from every area of the city.

Website?

<https://www.rocky4mayor.com>

Financial Strategy?

We have raised approximately \$270,000 and anticipate raising significantly more. Our expenses are kept down in a number of ways, including the use of my home as our campaign headquarters, the hiring of only one paid staff person, and the help of so many volunteers. As usual, I act as my own campaign manager, but utilize the advice of and consultation with several trusted friends and colleagues. I anticipate continuing posting frequent messages on social media sites (Instagram, FaceBook, TikTok, LinkedIn, YouTube, X (previously Twitter, and NextDoor), as we've been doing for several months. We will also pay for ads on digital media and on at least streaming TV. We will need continuing funding to run the aggressive, successful campaign we expect to conduct. We are grateful for any financial contributions and would be proud to include a WDC graphic for use in our campaign.

Endorsement?

Yes

Comments: I would be grateful for, and proud of, the endorsement by the WDC.

Financial Support?

Yes

Comments: The financial support from the WDC would not only be tremendously useful to us in communicating our message, but it would reflect a valued commitment by the WDC to the high principles for which our campaign is committed. I'd be very grateful for any financial help the WDC would be willing to provide.

Receive Donations?

Check (**please provide address in comments**)

Comments: Either a check or online contribution would be great. Please do whatever is most convenient to you. If sending a check, please make it payable to Rocky for Mayor and mail it to Rocky for Mayor, [418 Douglas Street, SLC 84102](#). An online contribution can be made here: <https://www.rocky4mayor.com/contribute.html>

If Check, Complete Mailing Address

418 Douglas St SLC 84102

If Credit Card, provide link

Bio?

Before being elected Mayor of Salt Lake City in 1999, Rocky Anderson practiced law for twenty-one years, focusing on the protection of people from governmental and corporate abuses of power, as well as the representation of people injured through the negligence of others or defrauded. He was lead counsel in major lawsuits on behalf of plaintiffs in cases involving securities fraud, professional malpractice, civil rights abuses (especially police abuse, civil rights violations by prison and jail personnel, and First Amendment violations), and business fraud.

Rocky, who served as Chair of the Utah State Bar Litigation Section, was listed in Best Lawyers in America. During those years, Rocky served on the Board of Directors of, and provided pro bono legal representation for, Planned Parenthood Association of Utah. He served as President of the Boards of the ACLU of Utah, Citizens for Penal Reform, and Guadalupe Schools. Rocky served as Salt Lake City Mayor for eight years (2000–2008). As Mayor, he conceived of and founded YouthCity, the city’s first after-school and summer youth program. He provided international leadership on climate protection, being named as one of the top 20 climate protection activists in the world by Bloomberg BusinessWeek and receiving the EPA’s Climate Protection Award, the Sierra Club Distinguished Service Award, and the World Leadership Award in London for his environmental programs. He fought a successful legal battle against state English-only legislation and provided consistent advocacy for compassionate and reasonable reforms of the nation’s immigration laws, receiving the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) “Profile in Courage Award” and the National Association of Hispanic Publications Presidential Award. Rocky provided vital advocacy and leadership for major expansion of mass transit and successfully fought against sprawl development. Rocky’s long-time advocacy for LGBTQ+ equality was recognized by the Human Rights Campaign when it named him as one of the top ten straight advocates in the United States for LGBTQ+ equality. After completing his second term as Mayor, Rocky founded High Road for Human Rights, where he served as Executive Director for four years. In 2011, Rocky co-founded the Justice Party and ran as its presidential nominee in 2012. He taught at the University of Utah for two semesters, then re-activated his Bar license in 2014. Rocky then successfully litigated major commercial and civil rights cases, including a renowned First Amendment case against the Utah Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and a civil rights action involving the preventable death of a woman at the Salt Lake County Jail. He was also successful in challenging the unconstitutional efforts of the Utah Legislature to require that all medical cannabis transactions be conducted through government agencies. Rocky received the 2019 American Association for Justice “Leonard Weinglass in Defense of Civil Liberties Award,” the Bill of Rights Defense Committee “Patriot Award,” the Morehouse College “Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award,” and the University of Utah “Distinguished Alumnus Award,” and was named “Utahn of the Year” in 2000 by The Salt Tribune.

Anything else?

I think I've covered just about everything. Thank you.

Please contact Wendy Davis at wendy@wendydavisutah.com with any questions.