



Dear friends and neighbors,

It is election season for our City –and for the Co-op! We are writing to urge you to join us in supporting Jarrett Smith for Mayor of Takoma Park and Randy Gibson for Ward 3 City Council. And please support the three excellent candidates for the TPSS Co-op board.

**For Mayor:** Jarrett Smith deserves our support for his consistent and courageous advocacy for the needs of all Takoma Park residents across the economic and racial spectrum. During his ten years on the City Council, Jarrett sponsored the City’s all-important legislation to apply a racial equity lens to major City decisions. He founded the Lunch and Learn program for underserved children. He has supported the TPSS Co-op as a key business, employer and institution in our City. And dear to our hearts, Jarrett has been the City Council’s champion for the use of a substantial portion of the \$17 million federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to serve the purpose for which they were intended: to provide economic relief and support to the many residents of our City who have been threatened with loss of housing and food insecurity as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Jarrett has proven his willingness to listen to his constituents and his ability to build consensus on needed legislation. When members of Takoma Park Presbyterian Church and other religious and civic organizations raised their concern that ARPA relief funds were being targeted inappropriately for capital improvement projects instead of pandemic relief, Jarrett responded immediately. Working together with Ward 1 representative Peter Kovar (who is retiring this term), Jarrett persuaded his fellow City Council member to redirect a significant portion of the ARPA funding to pandemic relief. Thanks to Jarrett’s and Peter’s leadership, the City Council ultimately increased the allocation for emergency rental assistance to \$750,000 and provided \$250,000 for feeding assistance, \$600,000 for a pilot program to use mental health counselors as alternative to policing responses to mental health crises, and \$2.3 million in direct cash assistance to residents with low incomes. None of this would have happened without Jarrett’s strong and consistent advocacy.

If Jarrett is elected, we believe he will continue to work hard to ensure that the interests of all Takoma Park residents are met. We agree with his priority of maintaining the affordability of Takoma Park by making tough budgetary decisions that will avoid more tax hikes. We also support his plan to make the application of the City’s racial equity lens a real and concrete decision-making tool rather than the formality it is now. And we applaud his commitment to greater transparency and accountability in the budgeting and decision-making processes.

**For City Council Ward 3:** If you live in Ward 3, we hope you will support Randy Gibson for City Council representative. Randy is already a great public servant, who has put in many hours of service for environmental conservation in our community. And Randy has long been a strong supporter of the TPSS

Co-op. Like Jarrett, Randy is concerned that our City staff has continued to grow over the past decade, while our population has remained essentially the same. We agree with his proposal for project-based budgeting as a means to rein in costs and maintain the affordability of our very diverse and vibrant City. If Randy is elected, we believe he will bring strong values and skills to the role of Ward 3 representative to the City Council.

**For the Co-op board:** Finally, please give a vote of appreciation for the public service of the three well-qualified candidates for the Co-op board: Ami Amin, Taylor Dibbert, and Orly Keiner. While they are unopposed, their public-spiritedness deserves our support. If you are a Co-op member, you can find their bios and cast your ballot on [tpss.coop](http://tpss.coop).

Thanks,

Diane Curran and Ferd Hoefner

*DC Fred H.*