Rozalia Janiszewska (City Councillor Candidate)

Thanks for reaching out about an important issue. Here are my responses:

- Food security is an increasingly important issue in Edmonton. A good indicator of this is that the Food Bank already assists tens of thousands of Edmontonians and that number continues to rise rapidly. Council needs to respond to the situation as best it can. Council's ability is limited as it doesn't have the authority or the resources to do things like increasing minimum wage or disability payments or issuing stimulus checks; however, there is nothing stopping Council from increasing funding for the Edmonton Food Bank and other NGOs that bring food directly to people's tables, as well as advocating to higher levels of government to do what falls within their jurisdiction. Council should do everything it can.

- I would review in detail the plans for all of these programs and meet with city partners involved in these programs to ask questions about what supports they need from Council for the city to hold up its end of the deal

- Increase funding for community kitchens and reduce red tape surrounding urban agriculture and community food security organising, i.e. making changes to zoning, bylaws, regulations, permitting, etc., where necessary to make it easier for local groups to feed people for free, while maintaining basic food safety standards

- Again, the best things the city can do is to ensure funding is available for community organisations, and that there is not so much red tape that it's discouraging people from feeding others

- Implement rent controls, create incentives for environmentally sustainable organisations and programs, encourage organisations to offer free counseling to people accessing food assistance

- This is a good idea and priority should go to representing local, community organisations that do mutual aid and non-profit food assistance. Space on the advisory body should be saved for small, democratic bodies rather than very large NGOs that border on feeling institutional

I am one of the founders of a food security organisation, Food Not Bombs YEG, which has been in Edmonton for 8 years. Food security is a topic that is close to home for me

as somebody who used to use the Food Bank and who has spent 8 years of her life trying to feed as many people as possible, while raising awareness about why food security is such an issue in Edmonton. I will keep all of those memories in mind if I am elected as Councilor.

Sincerely,

Rozalia Janiszewska
Candidate for Councilor
Ward Papastew