

City of London - Application for Appointment to City of London Municipal Council - Ward 6

Application

Contact Information

Name: **Mariam Hamou**

Qualifying Address: **468 Cheapside St.**

City, Province, Postal Code: **London, ON, N5Y 3X3**

Phone Number (for internal use only):

Email (for internal use only):

Experience and Qualifications

Please provide a brief written statement explaining why you would like to serve the remainder of the term as Ward 6 Councillor: (maximum 250 words):

I have been in Ward 6 for over 30 years. I come from the streets of this area. I have both gone to formerly Ryerson Public School, and now support the school as a volunteer while my children attend. I have befriended many ward residents through school events, neighbourhood functions, and book clubs. I know the families here and I hear daily about the things that matter to us most. Last week, my next-door neighbour came in and asked me if I had anything on my camera because her bike was stolen. I have previously worked at Western for 4 years in Financial Aid. I'm familiar with the administration and understand that Ward 6 must always include Western in the back of its mind when making any decision. Furthermore, both of my brothers live in Ward 6 off Lawson Rd. and I know many neighbours in that area. We want London to show, celebrate, and grow its diversity. We have gone through a major tragedy as a city through the terrorist attack of this past summer, which was specifically hard for my own religious community. Ward 6 holds the London Muslim Mosque (LMM). My grandfather was a builder of the mosque, my father was a builder of the school at the mosque, and when was on the BOD for the LMM, I built the extension and fought for federal funding for the elevator to ensure accessibility for all. I am both a product of and now advocate for the City of London's Muslim community, and the LMM. Appointing a member of my community would show good faith towards a marginalized group.

Please provide a brief written statement regarding your experience and qualifications: (maximum 250 words):

I worked for the House of Commons as an EA/Chief of Staff for Liberal MP Glen Pearson from 2006-2011. I sat with city council throughout that period, dealing both directly and indirectly with municipal issues involving the federal government. Secondly, I worked for the Syrian Coalition and Oppositional Forces - funded by the UN, EU and the US, in Turkey as the PR and Media Director for North America. I travelled the world meeting with foreign leaders and global media, advocating for and supporting the democracy movement in Syria. Through this project, I was a witness for Parliament of Canada's Foreign Affairs Committee to highlight the atrocities Syrian women were facing at the hands of both Syrian Government Forces and ISIS. Thirdly, I am a community-first person and have focussed on working hard to fix what was in my own backyard. I've chaired the London Public Library Board of Directors, and sat on a Striking Committee in 2011 for City Council. In 2015, I assisted the Mayor's office directly by settling refugees with the Syrian Refugee Fund, and by raising money and organizing support to help settle new Londoners.

In addition to these main reasons, I also have a great deal of Board experience (Regional HIV/AIDS Connection, Ontario Library Boards Association, Ontario Library Association, London Muslim Mosque, Scottish Rite Learning Centre, Association of London Muslims and many others), and have a Master's Degree in Library and Information Sciences.

Please provide a brief answer to the following question: Do you intend to seek Election to the same council seat in the 2022 Election? (it being noted that Municipal Council cannot prevent a person who is eligible from seeking election to Municipal Council, regardless of the statement provided.)(maximum 250 words):

To begin, I would like to clarify that my family and I decided that whenever Phil Squire completed his time as the Ward 6 councillor, that I would then run for the vacant position in the next Municipal election to follow. I have always respected the work that Phil put forth in representing our ward and have been ready to step forward when his time came to an end. I respect that members of council feel that the Ward 6 appointment should not be allowed to run in 2022, but according to the Municipal Elections Act, this cannot be enforced and I agree with Western's Political Science Professor Andrew Sancton that incumbency "won't be a major factor" in the next election in his October 27 comments on AM980. I also feel that true democracy should not attempt to silence or inhibit the motives and opportunity for its participants to impact positive change at any time and for any reason, including placing restrictions on their right to run for publicly elected office. As mentioned, I do intend on running in the October 2022 Municipal Election. I believe in democracy very strongly and have engaged in the democratic process in Ottawa and in Syria. I fought hard for Londoners in Ottawa, and fought hard for the people of Syria and their right to democracy. As a proud Canadian Muslim woman living with a disability in Ward 6, I am ready to serve my community today, and as of this date am also ready to serve them in October 2022 if elected.

Attach resume or other document here, if needed: **Mariam Hamou Resume 2021 - FOPL.pdf**

Attach more files here, if needed: **Ward 6 Application Supplemental information.pdf**

Confirmations

You must be able to make these confirmations to apply for this role: **I am a resident of London, Ontario, Canada, or I am the owner or tenant of land there, or the spouse of such owner or tenant.; I am at least 18 years old.; I am not ineligible or disqualified under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the Municipal Act, 2001, the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act or any other Act to be elected to or hold the above-mentioned office.; I am not prohibited from voting at the municipal election under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996.; I understand that my application may be published on a public agenda accessible to the public on the City of London's website.**

Submitted on: **11/7/2021 11:54:47 AM**

MARIAM K. HAMOU

468 Cheapside St.
London, ON N5Y3X3

PROFILE

Human rights activist and political advocate. Focused on promoting diversity, truth and successfully championing human rights by building democracy, through libraries, governments, political movements and other measures. Have international, federal, provincial and municipal political lobbying experience, and have been lobbied many times both in Ottawa and London. Community person who believes in being the change you want to see.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

North American PR & Media Director, Syrian Opposition Coalition; Istanbul, Turkey – 2013 - 2016

Advocate, lobbyist and political activist for a free and democratic Syria. Brief and pitch stories to major US journalists. Met with US Senators and Congress; EU Representatives, and other high ranking world leading bureaucrats to garner support for a free and democratic Syria. Participated in global press conferences, wrote and edited speeches for the President of the Coalition, **directed major worldwide media campaign with a tour** all over North America. Wrote talking points, Communique's to the UN, Media Fact Sheets. On the team writing Opeds published in NYT, and WSJ and speeches for the President. Created, maintained and updated all social media accounts: **@SyrCoalition, Facebook/SyrianNationalCoalition, youtube.com/user/SyrianCoalitionEn**. Created and coordinated social media campaigns along with social media strategy.

Selected Highlights of my personal work on this front:

Presented to the Foreign Affairs Committee as a witness to the atrocities in Syria - Parliament of Canada (speech)

Heart of a revolutionary Alumna helps tell the story of a Syrian civil war (interviewed)

Syrian Activists Fighting — And Failing — To Spark Action (interviewed)

The digital front line in Syria's civil war is a click away (interviewed)

House of Commons Petition - e-2020 (Syria) (wrote)

8 Facts about the Recent Poison Gas Attacks in Syria (wrote)

Selected Published Reports:

On the Outside: Bab al-Salama Refugee Camp

Douma Massacre – Bombing Marketplaces at Rush Hour

Russian Forces Destroy a Market in Areeha and Kill its People Following the Steps of the Syrian Regime

Also sourced/researched information and interviews for the following NYT Bestseller:

ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror - Michael Weiss and Hassan Hassan

London Public Library - Chair 2019-2020 - Board Member - 2014-Present

Became involved with SOLS in my first year and it began my love for library advocacy. Found my way to the OLBA through SOLS and used all my media and political connections to first bring library issues to the forefront of London and surrounding areas.

Selected Media Highlights

London's embattled provincial jail needs books for its inmate library (quoted)

London libraries go fine-free so more people can use service (quoted)

Meet the London Public Library's new CEO (quoted)

London city hall staff propose areas to cut to lower 4.5% tax hike (quoted)

Breaking down the Library Hot Spot lending program budget debacle (interviewed)

London's top librarian closing book on three-decade career (quoted)

Regional HIV/AIDS Committee - Board Member - 2016-Present

Advocated and lobbied both the municipal and provincial governments to establish a Safe Injection Site called CarePoint. Created a strategy with the Middlesex/London Health Unit to garner community and political support by successfully recruiting the Mayor and prominent community members to voice their support for the Overdose Prevention Site. First Overdose Prevention Site was opened February 12th, 2018, and we are now working on a second. Over 75 lives saved in one year by reversing deadly overdoses.

Selected Media highlights

Government of Ontario has approved the application for a permanent Consumption and Treatment Service (CTS) in London.

Ontario Library Association - Board Member: 2017-2020

Participated in **Queen's Part Lobby Day**. Helped create the **strategic plan** for the OLA also participated as an **Open Shelf Editor**.

Ontario Library Boards Association - President 2017-2018 Board Member - 2014-Present

InsideOLBA Editor - wrote articles about issues pertaining to public libraries and public library boards. Met with Deputy Minister Nancy Matthews with Shelagh Patterson to discuss OLA and ministry engagement (OLA hosts two events featuring the Ministry Awards for Public Libraries: Ontario Public Library Week and the Public Library Awards event); updates about the services and programs offered to communities by Public Libraries; and to support and opportunities for Ontario Public Libraries. Created a better working relationship between the OLS's and OLBA by attending OLSNorth conferences and meeting with SOLS representative bimonthly. Superconference 2017 Presenter -

When Bad Things Happen to Good Libraries: Surviving Catastrophic Events in your Library. Superconference Planner 2020, 2021, Bootcamp Planner 2020, 2021.

Other London Community Work - City of London, Canada

Working with the many agencies and health clinics on poverty and drugs initiative to help solve the current drug epidemic in London, Ontario. Advise on media initiatives as well as connecting with the media on different poverty projects in the city of London. Also working on co-ordinating and disseminating information about food projects that alleviate hunger in low income families as well as with non-profits who deliver food to the needy.

Selected Media Highlights

Press Release - Two Year Anniversary (wrote)

How this unassuming white truck will help feed the city's hungry (organized)

London Food Coalition tackles food insecurity and waste (quoted)

Syrian Relief Fund - Chair and Co-founder - 2014-2016

Aided churches in helping families bring refugees to London, ON. Raised and distributed over \$100,000 for Syrian Refugees with the Mayor's Office and other businesses in London, ON: **Londoners lining up to help Syrian refugees (quoted)** Arranged for housing, clothing, housewares be set up for incoming Syrian refugees. Political advocacy based on refugee needs. Visited organizations and spoke on the needs and issues surrounding refugees.

Executive Assistant/Chief of Staff to Glen Pearson, MP - London North Centre; Parliament of Canada —2006-2012

Managed, staffed and maintained workplaces a parliamentary and constituency office. Attended meetings with stakeholders – prepared all briefings and ensured all objectives of meetings are met as well as represent MP at various functions, media and ceremonies. Worked with constituents to ensure their needs are met specifically if the constituent is having trouble with a federal agency. Organized special events to showcase and promote London, Ontario issues to visiting dignitaries, media, business people, stakeholders and other Members of Parliament.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

PT Professor, Continuing Education - Fanshawe College — 2013 - 2018

Taught courses in writing, professional writing, public relations, crisis communications and business communications.

Financial Aid Officer, Western University; London, ON — 2002-2006

Distributed and administered bursaries and scholarships in the Financial Aid Office. Administered International Student Financial Aid related programs. Position included dealing directly with students' needs, staff, and faculty with direct reporting to the Ministry of Training and Universities. Administered bursaries to senior students.

EDUCATION/CERTIFICATES/TRAINING

Western University, London, ON - Master of Library and Information Sciences, 1999

Western University, London, ON - Honours BA., Language and Literature, 2004

Western University, London ON - BA., English, 1997

South Secondary School, London, ON - High School Diploma, 1993

Social Media Training Certificate - Michael Slaby - Chief Technology Officer of Obama for America in 2008 campaign - Certificate - 2013

San'yas: Indigenous Cultural Safety Training - Certificate - December 2020

Anti-Black Racism Training - OLA - Training - January 2021

Orton-Gillingham Certified Teacher - 2019-Present

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Child and Youth Development Clinic - Board Member - 2019-Present

AM980 Roundtable - Political Pundit/Advocate - 2016-Present

London Scottish Rite Learning Centre - Orton-Gillingham Tutor - 2019-Present

Nazem Kadri Foundation - Communications Director - 2017-Present

Southern Ontario Library Service - Trustee Council Member - 2014-2017

London Celebrates Canada - Board Member - 2011 - 2017

Striking Committee - London City Council - Committee Member - 2010

Association of London Muslims - Advisory Board Member - 2005 - 2009

London Muslim Mosque - Board Member - 2005-2009, 2012

Postsecondary Education Advisory Board MTCU - Government of Ontario - 2005-2007

Multicultural Community of London - Board Member - 2005 - 2009

Run for the Cure - Team Captain - 2006

Ward 6 Application

Extra information:

I didn't have a place to notify council of these details, but I think it's important you the following information:

I'm a person with a disability, breaking down barriers and overcoming obstacles daily.

I believe the local Person with Disability community deserves a voice at council too. I developed PTSD after my work with the Syrian Coalition because of the severe trauma I experienced in a humanitarian role during the atrocities of the Syrian Civil War. I lost friends; witnessed, and reported UN Human Rights violations, and lived in a state of fear for my own life (my office in Turkey was bombed twice and targeted by of both the Assad Regime and ISIS). My PTSD played a role in my development of a disease called Fibromyalgia. This has led to massive weight loss and weight gain as well as mental health concerns because of the medications I've taken. I mention this only because I know that there is a stigma behind admitting that you have a disability or live with mental health challenges, and I'd like to destigmatize this idea and champion our right to be heard and to make a difference. My ability to show great empathy towards people because of my disability is what helps guide my policy decisions, which has been proven in my governance work with the Regional HIV/AIDS Connection, the Ontario Library Association and The London Public Library. Both of my children have dyslexia and other learning disabilities. This has opened my own eyes as a trained librarian to the importance of inclusion and accessibility for all voices and abilities. I have advocated on behalf of my children to local schools and libraries, because of my own struggles with finding materials to help my children learn.

Also, I didn't know if council wanted any reference letters, but my strength comes from my neighbours and friends I have made throughout the over 30 years in this neighbourhood. I can collect many references from Ward 6 residents as well as institutions inside the Ward as a strength of my candidacy.

My husband and I have a small business running a boutique commodities brokerage, and I have two daughters who are 10 and 13. The Hamou-Tsouli family is a proud Ward 6 family of Londoners, and I am a member of multiple diverse communities that deserve a voice at council. I hope that our council sees the value in deeming me worthy of temporary appointment to the vacant Ward 6 seat, as I am ready to do the work and contribute right away.

Thank you,
Mariam Hamou