

Public Advocate Candidate:

Below is the Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club's Public Advocate Candidate

Questionnaire. Please fill it out and return to jimowles@gmail.com

Candidate Name: Rafael L. Espinal

Campaign Address: 41-05 Newtown Road, Astoria, NY 11103

Campaign Website: www.rafaelespinal.nyc

Campaign Telephone: 917-392-1284

Campaign Social Media Handles (Facebook/Twitter): www.facebook.com/RLEspinaljr; @RLEspinal

Campaign Contact (name/phone/email): Patrick Jordan – 917-392-1284 – jordan@rafaelespinal.nyc

1. Do you now support or have you ever supported an openly LGBTQ candidate for public office? If so, please identify any and all candidates.  
**YES, I supported Corey Johnson for Speaker. I was an early supporter**
2. If applicable, what legislation directly affecting the LGBT community have you introduced or co-sponsored? (indicate accordingly)  
**I've voted YES on all pieces of legislation affecting the LGBT community. I also passed the repeal of the cabaret law, which had a homophobic history.**
3. What LGBT organizations have you been involved with, either on a volunteer basis or professionally?  
**The Jim Owles Liberal Democratic Club.**
4. If applicable, what LGBT organizations have you allocated funds to?  
**GMHC**
5. Do you consider yourself a member of the LGBT community?  
**I consider myself a friend of the LGBTQ community.**
6. Have you marched in Pride? Which marches and for approximately how many years?  
**YES, I've marched in the Pride and Brooklyn Pride parades on different occasions over the past 5 years.**
7. Have you employed openly LGBT individuals previously? Do you employ any currently?  
**YES, for 5 years. Not sure if I currently employ an LGBT individual. Not a question I normally ask.**
8. If you receive the endorsement, do you agree to identify the club using its FULL name on all literature and electronic materials where you list endorsements?  
**YES**
9. What press conferences, demonstrations, rallies and protests in support of LGBT issues, pro choice legislation, criminal justice issues and the Resist Trump Movement have you attended?  
**Many over the years. I consider myself an advocate on all social issues. Most recently I went upstate to advocate for clemency for prisoners.**
10. Have you ever been arrested? If so please explain why and outcome of arrest.  
**NO**

11. Will you advocate in Albany for legislation to mandate the review of sentences of incarcerated individuals over the age of 55 who have served in excess of 15 years to determine if they warrant release?  
**YES**
12. Do you commit to visit constituents who are incarcerated in state prisons such as Bedford Correctional Facility?  
**YES**
13. Do you believe sincere remorse, risk of reoffending and actions taken while incarcerated should be considered over the original crime in determinations of parole?  
**YES**
14. Do you consent to having your name added to a letter of elected officials to the New York State Parole Board advocating for the release of Judith Clark?  
**YES. My name is already on a letter.**
15. Have you participated in any demonstrations or protests in relation to the issues of clemency and parole?  
**YES, just last month.**
16. Will you affirmatively seek to hire formerly incarcerated individuals?  
**YES.**
17. Do you believe in the legalization of sex work?  
**YES, with the proper regulations.**
18. What proposals will you advocate for the protect immigrants and the further New York as a Sanctuary City?  
***I fully support NYC as a Sanctuary City. As Public Advocate I will push for more funding for legal defense for immigrants; work closer with law enforcement to help them understand language barriers with immigrants and work with my State colleagues to make NY a Sanctuary State. I am also prime sponsor and passed legislation to make NYC a true sanctuary city by law.***
19. Will you advocate, including introducing legislation, to remove public funding from religious schools?  
**NO.**
20. What is your position on Amazon opening their headquarters in Queens?  
***I am against this plan. In fact I am the only Democratic Councilmember to not sign off on the support letter generated by the Council.***
21. Do you support removing the loitering statue from the state criminal code?  
**YES, within reasonable expectations.**
22. Do you support the legalization of marijuana?  
**YES. I was 1<sup>st</sup> elected to march in the marijuana parade. I believe with proper legislation legalization is a benefit to the entire State.**
23. Do you support the establishment of supervised drug consumption spaces?  
***Yes, if facility staff would have to be present to provide sterile injection supplies, answer questions on safe injection practices, administer first aid if needed, and monitor for overdose. SDC staff should also offer general medical advice and referrals to drug treatment, medical treatment, and other social support programs.***
24. Have you ever endorsed any member of the IDC or any candidates who challenged IDC members? Please identify all candidates  
**NO**

25. Do you support reform of the CCRB? If yes, please explain.  
**YES. The CCRB should be located under the Public Advocates office to diminish corruption on complaints.**
26. Please identify 3 boards on which the PA serves and 3 appointments the PA makes that are of the utmost importance to you.  
**The 3 appointments would be the director of the New York City Independent Budget Office; a member of the New York City Planning Commission; and the Commission of Public Information and Communication**
27. What reforms to the powers and duties of the office would you advocate for?  
**When elected public advocate, I should have unfettered subpoena power to bolster my office's investigatory mandate. This would require City Council action. I will partner with the city comptroller, who has far-reaching auditing authority, to jointly expose fraud, waste and corruption in the city. And as public advocate I will tap into the experience and expertise of the thousands of local community board members throughout the city.**
28. Will you commit to hiring a member of the LGBT community to serve as a liaison to the community?  
**YES**
29. Will you commit to ensuring diverse LGBT representation among your staff?  
**YES**
30. Who did you support for office in the following races A) Mayor and Public Advocate in 2013 B) President in 2016 C) Governor and Attorney General in 2018  
**A) DiBlassio and James B) Bernie Sanders, then Hillary C) No one**
31. Do you support Habitat for Humanity's proposal for gay-friendly low income housing on Elizabeth Street?  
**I 100% support gay friendly low income housing. I believe the city could do a better job at finding a location that doesn't destroy community space.**
32. Would you speak in favor of an establishment applying for a liquor license when the opposition is based on Nimby and or unreasonable concerns?  
**YES, have done so in the past and created the office of nightlife to help establishments deal with bureaucracy.**