

Briannon Wilfong

TUCSON, Ariz. – Last week, city council candidates who will be running for a spot on the board discussed questions about city issues and plans for their campaign and the future of Tucson.

The forum ran by the League of Women Voters of Tucson was led in a different format than traditional forums. All of the eight candidates were not given a chance to answer every question during the hour-long debate, which made the forum very odd for the audience to watch.

They ran the forum by having three of the candidates from different wards answer a question. The audience did not get the chance to hear from both candidates from the same ward about the same question. The only chance Lane Santa Cruz, Sam Nagy, Paul Cunningham, Ewart Williams, Nikki Lee, Michael Hicks, and Cara Bissel got to speak on the same subject was during their opening and closing statements.

The highly restrictive forum, where audience members were scolded for taking pictures, videos and using social media to record and share the forum, meant that the forum went largely unnoticed here in Tucson as the forum organizers actively discouraged attempts to use any other media than their Facebook stream.

One of the topics that was discussed at Thursday's forums was Prop 205, a proposition to declare Tucson as a sanctuary city, as defined by [Tucson Families Free & Together](#).

The question presented to the candidates about Prop 205 was as followed: The American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona or ACLU, has endorsed Prop 205, stating, 'Arizona has a deep-seeded problem with racial profiling. It is a problem that plagues every law enforcement agency in the state including the Tucson Police Department.' Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Lane Santa Cruz, democrat nominee for Ward 1, supported Prop 205.

“I agree that as a nation we have an issue with racial profiling and a lot of comes from our socialization and our implicit bias and that law enforcement is not immune to that,” Santa Cruz said. “I signed the petition for Prop 205, and I am supporting it.”

Santa Cruz supports Prop 205 because it would mean something for the diverse community, as the Ward 1 community as a collective is largely Hispanic. She believes that the city of Tucson needs to continue address other law enforcement agencies that are an issue, which includes DPS, Highway Patrol, the Sheriff’s Department, ICE and Border Patrol.

Candidates from other wards had different opinions about Prop 205. Ward 2 candidate, republican nominee Ewart Williams, said no to Prop 205 becoming enacted.

“I’m not sure about you all but the way I was raised, you take care of home first. We have homeless people out on the street right now. We need to be worried about them. That is our first and foremost...are you going to take these people into your homes and feed them, give them shelter, give them medical care, are you going to do that?” Williams said. “The issue is about cause and effects. Look at California, you see the cause and you know the effects. I don’t want that for the city of Tucson.”

The Tucson City Council election will take place Nov. 5, 2019.