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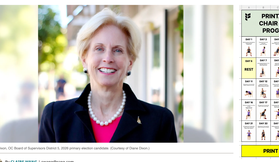
Diane Dixon, OC Board of Supervisors District 5, 2026 primary election questionnaire



Diane Dixon, OC Board of Supervisors District 5, 2026 primary election candidate. (Courtesy of Diane Dixon.)

By CLAIRE WAVIE | cwaviejr@ocreg.com
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Ahead of the June primary election, the Southern California News Group compiled a list of questions to pose to the candidates who wish to represent you. You can find the full questionnaire below. Questionnaires may have been edited for spelling, grammar, length and, in some instances, to remove hate speech and offensive language.

Name: Diane Dixon

Current job title: California State Assemblywoman

Age: 74

Incumbent: No

Other political positions held: California State Assemblywoman, Newport Beach Mayor & City Councilwoman

City where you reside: Newport Beach, California

Campaign website or social media: www.DianeForOC.com

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- Diane Dixon
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In your opinion, what is the biggest need your district faces, and how would you address it through the Board of Supervisors? (Please limit your answer to 200 words or less.)

Orange County is one of the most beautiful places in the world to live, but for too many families, it has also become one of the most unaffordable and that has to change.

Housing costs, utility bills, and everyday expenses have skyrocketed, and Gavin Newsom and Sacramento have only made things worse. Families filling up their gas tanks and walking out of the grocery store are wondering how the bill got so high. Parents are questioning whether their children will ever be able to afford a home in the community where they grew up. Small business owners are drowning in fees and overbearing regulations that make it harder to hire people, make a profit and keep their doors open.

As supervisor, I will cut wasteful spending, protect taxpayers, and scrutinize every major contract, as I did for over 30 years as a senior executive at a Fortune 300 company, working every day to create value for shareholders. I will fight policies that drive up costs for working families and work with cities to cut red tape so housing can actually get built.

Families across this district make hard choices at the kitchen table every single month. Their county government should too. Working in business and watching every shareholder dollar applies to watching out for taxpayers. If it isn't broke — look again. There is always a way to build a better product that costs less and creates greater value. I learned that in my business career over and over.

Where do you think the county is effectively spending to address the needs of unhoused residents, and what would you change about where money spent on homelessness is prioritized? (Please limit your answer to 200 words or less.)

Orange County has made real investments in homeless outreach and emergency shelter, and those front-line workers deserve credit for difficult work done under difficult circumstances. Encampment enforcement has improved because leaving people on the streets without services is not compassion; it is neglect.

But the numbers tell a hard truth. Orange County's unsheltered population grew 37% between 2022 and 2024. Meanwhile, Sacramento has spent $24 billion on homelessness statewide since 2015, and I have proposed a state audit to find where the money went and how many homeless individuals were served. No one knows the outcomes at the state level. The homeless programs do not track outcomes, so it is impossible to know if they accomplished anything. Gov. Newsom even vetoed bipartisan legislation that would have required annual evaluations of how the money was spent.

Orange County cannot afford to repeat Sacramento's mistakes. I will push for a full audit of county homelessness spending and program efficiency and work with my colleagues to shift resources toward mental health treatment and substance abuse recovery rather than simply subsidizing housing with no accountability attached, and require every service provider to demonstrate measurable results. Writing checks without requiring results is not a homelessness policy. It is a blank check with no end in sight.

Residents deserve transparency and honesty. As your supervisor, I will deliver that.

Looking at the county's annual budget, what would you like to change about how funds are allocated? Is there a department or project that has not received the funding it needs? (Please limit your answer to 200 words or less.)

The Board of Supervisors last year adopted a $10.8 billion budget. Orange County taxpayers have every right to ask what they are getting for it, and right now, the honest answer is not enough.

When I talk to residents across the district, two concerns come up again and again: public safety and mental health. The Orange County Sheriff's Department, the Orange County Fire Authority and our first responders need more resources, not fewer. The Orange County Health Care Agency is being asked to manage a behavioral health crisis driven by homelessness and substance abuse that has grown faster than its capacity to respond.

I will also scrutinize every significant contract with outside vendors and service providers. Orange County is currently conducting a forensic audit of $4.2 billion in county contracts and phase one alone has already uncovered serious problems across nearly $500 million in spending. The Orange County Grand Jury recently found that despite the county spending over $1 billion on homelessness, its strategy has been "largely unsuccessful." That is not a funding problem. That is an accountability problem.

The public expects transparency from public leaders in spending and governance. How can this be achieved? How can the county do better in this area? (Please limit your answer to 200 words or less.)

Transparency and trust are the most fundamental obligations of public service and accountability needs to be restored.

A former county supervisor corruptly steered millions of taxpayer dollars to personal associates, was sentenced to federal prison for corruption and now we're in the midst of a forensic audit that is still examining $4.2 billion in county contracts.

The county has taken steps in the right direction. As your next county supervisor, I will push for competitive bidding requirements on all significant contracts, mandatory public disclosure of how discretionary funds are spent and independent reviews of every major vendor. No more contracts awarded without clear benchmarks and accountability.

Social services providers say they expect to see a continued rise in food and housing insecurity this year. In addition, many low-income residents may lose health care as new eligibility requirements for Medi-Cal are implemented. What role do you think the county can play in supporting people who are falling through the cracks? (Please limit your answer to 200 words or less.)

Orange County has a responsibility to its most vulnerable residents and I take that seriously. Seniors, veterans, children and working families who fall on hard times deserve a county government that is there for them.

But the answer to rising needs is not simply more spending. It is smarter and more efficient spending. Before expanding any program, we need to ask hard questions about what is working, what is not and whether every dollar is actually reaching the people it is meant to serve.

I will push for better coordination among county departments, nonprofits and faith-based organizations so that residents in crisis are not bounced from one agency to another in search of help. I will also work to protect core safety net services in the budget and push back against Sacramento when the state shifts its financial obligations onto county governments and local taxpayers without providing the resources to meet them.

Washington and Sacramento created many of these funding challenges. Orange County should not be left holding the bag alone while families pay the price.

Why would you make a good leader, and how would you represent the diverse communities of your district? (Please limit your answer to 200 words or less.)

Leadership is about having the conviction to do what's right and deliver results. That is why I entered public service in the first place and it is the standard I hold myself to every single day.

I spent over 30 years in the private sector as a senior executive at a Fortune 300 company, where I built consensus and delivered outcomes every day. I took those same skills into public service, serving eight years on the Newport Beach City Council, including two terms as mayor, where we delivered budget surpluses, paid down pension liabilities, improved public safety and drove operational efficiencies.

Fighting for working families sometimes means standing up to the establishment. In Sacramento, I have done exactly that, pushing back against Gavin Newsom and legislative Democrats whose policies have driven up the cost of living, made it harder to run a small business and shifted financial burdens onto local governments and the families they serve. I will bring that same willingness to take on Sacramento to the Board of Supervisors.

The 5th District is home to an incredibly wide range of communities, each with its own needs and priorities. I respect those differences and will fight for every corner of this district with the same energy and commitment. Every resident deserves a supervisor who shows up, listens and delivers.

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Sourcing & Methodology

The Orange County Register sent questionnaires, based on current events and questions from readers, to candidates on the ballot in Orange County via email, phone and/or mail in August. Answers have been lightly edited only to correct spelling or grammar or to remove offensive language and hate speech.

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