

## **JUDY PRIESTLY - FLINT CITY COUNCIL WARD 4 (NP)**

.Key findings include:

- **Current Role & Tenure:** First-term councilmember elected 2021, defeating then-Council President Kate Fields (~55%).
- **Professional Background:** Certified Public Accountant with 30+ years in finance; longtime Flint resident who still lives in her grandmother's Fourth Ward home. Co-chairs the **Finance Committee**, emphasizing fiscal accountability and clearer budgeting practices.
- **Political Alignment:** Self-described lifelong Republican, one of the few openly GOP-affiliated figures in Flint city government; serves on the Genesee County Republican Party Executive Committee.
- **Council Dynamics & Conduct:** Has both criticized and at times participated in boycotts/walkouts amid Flint's factional fights. Publicly condemned 2024 meeting boycotts for jeopardizing budget and ARPA deadlines, warning that Flint risked losing federal funds.
- **Recall Attempts:** *May 2023:* Recall filed for "failing to work effectively with colleagues." *Dec 2024:* Nine recall filings alleged campaign-finance fees owed and a vote to appoint Leon El-Alamin; all denied by Genesee County Election Commission for insufficient clarity.
- **Recent Controversy:** In Oct 2025, voted no on a resolution declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, explained as avoiding politicization of a pending case against a colleague but criticized as insensitive.

Flint is the largest city and county seat of Genesee County (66 miles NW of Detroit). Population is 79.7k and the city is majority Black/African American, with relatively high poverty and low median household income compared with state benchmarks; 56% Black, 34% White (non-Hispanic), with small Latino and other communities (ACS) [[Census Reporter](#), accessed, 10/28/2025].

Using the Genesee County official canvasses, Flint voted overwhelmingly Democratic in both cycles 80% Democratic in 2020 (citywide result implied by summing all "City of Flint" precincts in the county's 11/17/2020 canvass) and 77% Democratic in 2024 (from the 11/19/2024 canvass listing "City of Flint, Precinct 1-29"). In short: Flint remained a deep-blue anchor across both elections [[Genesee County](#), 11/17/2020] [[Genesee County](#), 11/19/2024].

### **BACKGROUND**

Judy Priestley is a lifelong Flint resident and a first-term City Councilmember for Ward 4. She was born in Flint and has lived in her Fourth Ward home (formerly her grandmother's house) for over 30 years. Priestley unseated the incumbent Council President, Kate Fields, in the November 2021 election with about 55% of the vote, a significant upset attributed to voter frustration with the council's "chaos" and incivility. A certified public accountant by profession, she noted she was the only 2021 candidate with a finance background. Priestley co-chairs the Council's Finance Committee and has emphasized "fiscal accountability", criticizing colleagues who didn't even read financial reports and pushing for clearer budgeting practices.

Priestley is openly affiliated with the Republican Party, a rarity in Flint's city politics. She describes herself as a "*lifelong Republican*" who was encouraged to run by the local GOP. (City races are

officially nonpartisan, but Priestley serves as an elected member of the Genesee County Republican Party's Executive Committee). She has not previously held public office, but her civic involvement (including serving on Flint's Zoning Board in the past). As of 2025, Priestley is running for re-election as the 4th Ward incumbent, positioning herself as a professional, pragmatic voice on a council still finding its footing [[Mid Michigan Now](#), 11/3/2021] [[Diane Priestley](#), accessed, 10/28/2025].

Priestley has, at times, joined walkouts or skipped special sessions amid Flint's factional fights—one absence was even cited in a 2023 recall filing—and other members have likewise walked out or refused to attend, repeatedly breaking quorum and fueling the council's "organized chaos" [[Mid Michigan Now](#), 3/1/2022] [[WNEM](#), 6/3/2025]. When some council members began boycotting meetings in Fall 2024 (leaving the council without a quorum for weeks), Priestley spoke out about the harm to the city. As Finance Committee chair, she warned that Flint was "in danger of having to return [unspent] ARPA dollars" because the council couldn't convene to approve projects, calling the situation untenable [[WNEM](#), 11/6/2024].

## **ON THE ISSUES**

*NO FINDINGS OF NOTE FOR FIRST ROUND VET*

## **VULNERABILITIES & ADVERSE FINDINGS OF NOTE**

### **Recall Attempts**

**May 2023: A Resident Filed A Recall Petition Citing Priestley For "Failing To Work Effectively With Her City Council Colleagues."** "A Flint resident submitted recall language against City Councilwoman Judy Priestley on May 23, 2023, citing that she was 'failing to work effectively with her colleagues.' Adam Ford, who filed the language, told Flint Beat he thinks every city council member should be recalled, but he's just doing his part as a resident of the fourth ward, which Priestley represents." [[Flint Beat](#), 6/2/2023]

**2024: Nine Recall Petitions Were Filed Against Priestley, Alleging That She Owed Campaign Finance Fees To Genesee County.** "The nine sets of language filed against Priestley gave a variety of reasons for a recall, some of which claimed Priestly owes campaign finance fees to Genesee County. Some others stated the reason for the recall is that Priestly voted to appoint Leon El-Alamin to the council's 1st Ward seat." [[WNEM](#), 12/2/2024]

**December 2024: Genesee County Election Commission Denied All Recall Petitions Against Priestley.** "Several recall petition language sets were denied by the election commission today in Flint. Flint Mayor Sheldon Neeley, and Flint City Councilmembers Ladel Lewis and Judy Priestley all recently had recall language filed against them. On Wednesday morning, the Genesee County Election Commission met to go over the sets in Judge Barkey's courtroom. All of the language filed against the three were denied, most for "insufficient clarity", some for lack of factual information." [[Midland Michigan Now](#), 12/18/2024]

**October 2025: Priestley Voted No On A Resolution To Recognize October As Domestic Violence Awareness Month In Flint.** "Flint City Council members are split on whether to declare October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, with some saying the declaration was introduced to embarrass a colleague facing felony assault and domestic violence charges. A final vote on the resolution could come on Monday, Oct. 27, after it was approved 5-2 during a committee meeting this week. The resolution makes no mention of the pending criminal case faced by Councilman Leon El-Alamin (Ward 1) in

Genesee Circuit Court, but two council members -- Ladel Lewis (Ward 2) and Judy Priestley (Ward 4) -- withheld their support.” [[MLive](#), 10/24/2025]

## **SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS**

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