

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 1

DATE December 21, 2014 WARD 18th

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NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED 1,624 NUMBER REQUIRED 473

Please provide the following background information:

A. Elective or appointive public and/or party offices previously held including dates.

I severed on the local school council for two terms since 2012.

B. Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate. N/A

C. What is your primary occupation?

I am an attorney.

D. Briefly list your civic activities of the past ten years.

- I have served on the local school council for two terms since 2012- 2014.
- I have also served on the national executive board for the law school democrats.

E. What subjects have you studied and what experience have you had which will be most helpful to you in the office you seek?

Lawyer, Educator, Advocate, I received my Bachelor and Juris Doctor from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I currently serve on the Bogan High School Local School Council as the community representative. Prior to attending law school I taught fourth grade in the Mississippi Delta Region. Collectively, my experience and training give me the background to best serve the 18th ward as Alderman.

F. What candidates have you supported in past elections? Please be specific in describing your role in each campaign. N/A

G. Please list all endorsements you have received so far. N/A

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H. As concisely as possible, state why you feel you should be endorsed over the other candidate(s). What goals for the office you seek are most important to you personally?

I attempted throughout my life to help other individuals get the right start in life or start a new path. As a teacher, I represented other teachers, staff, and Para-professional on the personnel policy team. As a lawyer, I represent a school district and hold all stakeholders accountable including board members. As the community representative for the Bogan High School Local School Council, I fought to keep a neighborhood school (Avalon Park) open when it was placed on the school closure list. Everyday, I represent homeowners in foreclosure defense to ensure the stability of our communities.

I would like to serve on the Chicago City Council because I am committed to ensuring the highest quality of education within our community and our city, and because I believe that my experiences as a local school council community representative, teacher, and attorney will make me a strong addition to the city council.

I. What is your campaign budget? How much have you raised to date?

My campaign budget is \$50,000. I have raised over \$20,000 to date.

J. How many people are on your campaign staff? How many volunteers are on your list?

I have five people on my campaign staff. I have a volunterrs list of 30 individuals.

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Most questions on this questionnaire can be answered by checking either YES or NO. Others are essay questions and all have the option of answering in greater detail. Just hit enter at the end of the question and begin typing your answer in the additional space.

CITY COUNCIL REFORM AND ETHICS

	YES	NO	
1.	x		Do you favor maintaining the current number of City Council committees?
	ESSAY		Which committees, if any, would you combine or eliminate? At this moment, I will not combine or eliminate any existing committees. However, I am amenable to changing in the number of committees.
2.	ESSAY		What reforms are necessary in the City Council's committee rules and structure? I believe reforms are necessary in the notice process for the City Council's committee rules and structure. This includes the amount of notice given to both the public and council members.
3.	x		Would you give the Inspector General's office independent subpoena power or other compulsory process that can be directed against city officials, agencies and employees without necessitation the approval of the Mayor or Corporation Counsel?
4.	x		Should the Inspector General be able to initiate his or her own investigations of Aldermen without a complaint from outside the office?
5.	x		Should the Inspector General be able to pursue anonymous complaints?
6.		x	Do you support patronage in hiring and promoting public employees?
7.		x	Will you employ or have you employed staff, in your office who hold other public sector jobs concurrently?
8.		x	Will you employ or have you employed staff, in your office who have either outside employment or contracts with entities which do business with the City?
9.	x		Will you vote for an ordinance mandating that the City contest unemployment claims by former employees who were fired for cause?
10.	x		Will you vote for an ordinance forbidding the City to hire or contract the services of anyone previously fired for cause from the City or any other unit of government?
11.		x	Will you support an ordinance to reduce the number of wards?
12.			Have you joined or will you join:
			The Paul Douglas Caucus
			The Independent Progressive Caucus
		x	Both
13.	x		Do you support changing the state statute to return to filling aldermanic vacancies by special election, rather than Mayoral appointment?
14.	x		Will you vote for an ordinance requiring redistricting of the wards to be based on non-partisan criteria and not to benefit any specific individual or political party?
15.		x	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from current or potential suppliers or employees?
16.		x	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from people or businesses seeking zoning changes in your ward?
17.	x		Do you support public financing of municipal campaigns?
	ESSAY		Please explain your position. I believe money should not be the sole basis to determine who will serve our city on the council. Public financing of municipal campaigns can prevent the new trajectory that suggests that the candidate with the most financial backing will represent the people. This path is flawed and public financing of municipal campaigns may reverse this pattern.

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18.	ESSAY	<p>Who are your top 5 contributors and how much has each contributed to your campaign?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Precious Jacobs \$750 2. Lindsey Dates \$500 3. Arlander Keys \$500 4. Shondra Clay \$250 5. Allison Jack \$250
19.		<p>What changes would you support to the redistricting process?</p> <p>I would recommend a community based redistricting process that develops independent analysts of the ward maps.</p>
REVENUE AND BUDGET		
20.	x	Will you vote to hire independent analysts to conduct a forensic audit of past City spending?
		Will you vote for a budget ordinance which would require:
21.	x	public questioning of city department heads concerning their departments' specific budget requests?
22.	x	making budget copies available to the public 30 days in advance of hearings?
23.	x	restoring city-wide community group budget hearings several months prior to the publication of the budget, as were held under the Washington and Sawyer administrations?
24.	ESSAY	<p>What additional revenue sources, if any, would you propose?</p> <p>The city is in serious financial trouble and can't afford the level of service it currently provides. I have lived in the 18th ward for many years, and in speaking with my fellow residents, the consensus is nobody is willing to suffer from a further reduction of the services that many of these residents depend on. However, as a lawyer, educator, and homeowner, I also understand the value of fiscal responsibility and a balanced budget, and realize the dire straits the city's budget deficit places its residents. Therefore I think it's important to look for new sources of city revenue while also increasing fees, penalties and (as a last resort) taxes to help fund promised services and existing obligations.</p> <p>However, the high level of municipal spending that contributes to the deficit goes beyond just the services that my neighbors and I rely on. I would look to shrink the city government administrative budget by consolidating several city council committees, reducing redundant upper-level administration, and refocusing the city's commitment to environmental technology, which will ultimately save the city money in energy, paper and other goods. All of these administrative cuts should be done without reducing any core city services. All in all, we need to find new revenue sources and cut inefficiencies to help our city get back to a state of fiscal solvency.</p>
25.	x	Do you support casino gambling for Chicago?
26.	x	Will you vote to require a citywide referendum before any gambling is instituted in the City?
27.	x	Will you vote to roll back Mayoral and Aldermanic salaries to pre-2007 levels?
28.	x	Will you vote for an ordinance limiting future Mayoral and Aldermanic salary increases to the same percentage as the lowest raise for any class of city employees?
29.	x	Do you agree with the criticism that City government is top heavy with management?
	ESSAY	Please explain your position.

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		I believe that City government is top heavy with management. We have department heads with minimum staff support to complete the city's business. The City should invest in more workers to deliver the services people depend you every day.	
30.	ESSAY	<p>What measures will you vote for to reform the city pension plan and ensure its solvency? The city's police and fire pension funds have been called a "ticking time bomb," with the pension commission predicting that funds will run out of money. "There is no low- or no-cost solution to this problem," the commission wrote in a report. "Deferring action is not a viable option." I have a plan that works to bring the pension funds to solvency. This includes paying down existing debt obligation with the cost benefit of alleviating the taxpayers of the delay tactic, nicknamed "scoop and toss."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I believe that once an employee starts paying into a pension program, the benefits should be clear and concrete. As a lawyer, I also believe that the equitable (and legal) thing to do is to honor the originally "fully negotiated agreement." But these Pension programs need to become properly funded, and I would support identifying a dedicated revenue source strictly to replenish our depleted pension funds. As a last resort, and in a worst case scenario, I could support reduced benefits for future employees based on negotiations and conversations with organized labor that provides for everyone's needs. It's important to work together to responsibly solve our financial problems while protecting the rights of our working class.</p>	
31	ESSAY	<p>How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public employee pensions? Pensions are one of the legs of the retirement stool American's depend on. We should strive to provide strong pensions for all working Americans- both public and private sector. I would strongly oppose any move that further punishes the workers of this great City for the mistakes that politicians have made over the decades past. I would oppose pension cuts.</p>	
32.	Choose One	Should discretionary funds for ward services and infrastructure improvements be allocated	
		in equal amounts to each ward	
		based on the size of each ward	
		x	
	YES	NO	
33.	x	Will you institute participatory budgeting to allow ward residents to vote on discretionary spending in your ward?	
PRIVATIZATION			
34.	ESSAY	<p>Which city services or assets, if any, do you believe should be privatized and what is your criteria? Currently, I do not believe any additional city services and/or assets should be privatized. The budget should never be balanced on the back of hard working people. No decisions on public services, privatization or staffing levels should be made without having conversations with the experts, and those are the people who actually do the work for the City of Chicago. Therefore, I would seek input from</p>	

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		community organizations and organized labor when making budgetary decisions about staffing levels, efficiencies and privatization in city departments.
35.	x	Will you vote for an ordinance requiring an independent analysis of any lease or outsourcing arrangement?
36.	x	Will you vote for an ordinance requiring detailed analysis and evaluation of any lease or outsourcing arrangement at least 30 days prior to the City Council vote?
37.	ESSAY	Before voting on privatization contracts, what will you do to ensure that they deliver the maximum return and best service for city residents in the long term? I believe privatization contracts should have an annual review provision, wherein the private entity must meet benchmark align with service expectations.
38.	ESSAY	What procedures will you implement to ensure that privatization arrangements are not being used to move patronage workers outside of the scope of the Rutan decision requirements or any other anti-patronage rules or protocols? I believe ethics statements incorporated into privatization contracts will provide a foundation for procedures to ensure that privatization arrangements are not being used to move patronage workers. This measure is made in addition to other safeguards the council may create.
PLANNING, ZONING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
39.	ESSAY	How will you involve ward residents in planning? I hope to create an 18th Ward advisory committee that will hold monthly meetings to inform residents of upcoming legislation and community economic development projects.
40.	ESSAY	What is your long-range plan for development of the ward? Ideally, I want to use urban planners to see how we can use vacate spaces within the ward to assist small businesses. I would support expansion and extension of TIF districts in the 18th Ward.
41.	ESSAY	What criteria do you or will you use in determining whether or not to grant a zoning change or variance? Generally, I hope to incorporate the advise of residents, the 18 th ward advisory committee, and other professionals to determine whether or not to grant a zoning change or variance.
42.	ESSAY	How will you involve residents in planning, approval, and oversight of TIF districts? Again, I hope to use my 18 th Ward advisory committee to involve residents in planning, approval, and oversight of TIF districts.
43.	x	Will you vote to terminate a TIF if the objectives of the TIF plan have been accomplished before the 23 year period is ended?
44.	x	Will you vote to return unspent and uncommitted TIF funds on an annual basis to the various taxing bodies?
45.	ESSAY	How do you propose to replace property tax revenue for CPS and other taxing bodies that is lost to TIF development? I will encourage employers to hire local residents through ward specific seminars, job-training programs, and job fairs for residents. I currently assist local high schools in their law programs through teaching and coaching courses. I hope to bring more professionals to 18th ward schools to cultivate a community of future professionals. As a result I anticipate an higher tax population within the ward.
46.	x	Will you support a moratorium on creation of any new TIF districts until new funding sources are identified to replace the revenue diverted to the TIF?

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47.	x		Will you vote for an ordinance requiring that large corporate entities receiving \$250,000 or more in public subsidies, and their tenants, must pay their workers a living wage (currently \$11/hour)?
48.	x		Will you vote to invest substantially more in job-training and the creation of transitional job programs in disadvantaged communities, including the formerly incarcerated, homeless, youth, and non-English speakers?
HOUSING			
49.	x		Will you vote to amend the Vacant Properties Ordinance to require mortgage servicers to register their properties?
50.	x		Do you support enacting an ordinance to preserve Single-Room Occupancy housing?
51.	x		Will you vote for an inclusionary zoning ordinance requiring developers to set aside 30% of residential new construction or renovation for the creation of affordable housing?
52.	ESSAY		<p>What measures will you support to guarantee that some of the foreclosed properties saved through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program are made affordable to families at 40% and 60% of AMI?</p> <p>First, I believe the city should monitor the foreclosed property better and prevent the so-called zombie properties from spreading throughout our city. Zombie properties are foreclosed homes where the bank refuses to confirm the sale. The city can prevent this practice by identifying these properties and obtaining first lien priority. These properties in turn can be used to create affordable homes for families at 40% and 60% of AMI.</p>
53.	ESSAY		<p>What procedures and safeguards would you put in place on conversion/demolition of SRO's and other low income housing to ensure that affordable housing will continue to be available for low income tenants who would otherwise be displaced?</p> <p>Please see response to question 52.</p>
54.	ESSAY		<p>What measures will you support to ensure that there is an adequate supply of affordable family sized units available to families in the Section 8 program?</p> <p>I will use housing organizations to properly list available families property in the Section 8 program.</p>
55.	ESSAY		<p>What measures will you support to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals and families who are not served by any existing programs?</p> <p>Please see response to question 54.</p>
	YES	NO	Do you support any of the following to be built in your ward?
56.	x		low income rental housing that is affordable to those at 15% to 30% of AMI?
57.	x		supportive housing for people overcoming addiction and other problems which contribute to homelessness?
58.	x		shelters for the homeless?
59.	x		Do you favor a moratorium on the conversion or demolition of SRO's pending the development of protections and remedies to protect the displaced tenants from becoming homeless?
60.	x		Do you support allowing the demolition of existing public housing units without new or rehabilitated replacement housing on a one-for-one basis?
61.	Choose One		Which standard should the City use to define affordable housing?
			AMI of the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area
			AMI of Cook County
			AMI of Chicago
	x		AMI of the Community Area

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EDUCATION		
62.	Choose One	Which of the following options for choosing the School Board do you support?
		Popular Election
		Mayoral appointment from nominations made by community representatives
		Maintaining the current system of Mayoral appointment
	x	A mix of elected and appointed members
	YES	NO
63.	x	Will you support a city-wide lottery for enrollment in magnet schools?
64.	x	Will you support LSCs in maintaining full powers, and support them through adequate funding levels that provide training and support for LSCs to do their jobs?
65.	x	Will you support a moratorium on school closings until a detailed analysis of the impacts of shuffling children is completed, and a real plan to address the quality of education and safety for every child is in place?
66.	x	Will you support development and implementation of a more comprehensive and accurate approach to evaluate student and teacher performance than reliance on the SAT and ACT tests?
67.	x	Would you favor repealing (or modifying) the 70% requirement for voting to authorize teacher strikes?
68.	ESSAY	<p>What is your assessment of Renaissance 2010 and its implementation in your ward as well as the City as a whole? Please include in your assessment the role of charter schools as well as the power to reconstitute schools.</p> <p>I support an increase in high-quality public education options such as selective enrollment schools, STEM schools, International Baccalaureate schools, and high-quality Charter schools. Fixing our schools is at the core of creating good jobs, safer streets, and brighter futures. Putting children first can no longer just be a tag line, it must be a mindset used to address every issue. Renaissance 2010 was a start to a path to high quality education, but needs adequate funding and oversight to ensure its success.</p>
69.	ESSAY	<p>What should the City do to improve the quality of all local schools?</p> <p>I believe expanding existing half-day early learning programs (like Preschool for All and Head Start) to a full day for 3 and 4-year-olds is one of the most pressing issues facing education in Chicago. I would expand early learning programs for infants and toddlers from birth to 3 –years old who receive child care through the Illinois Child Care Assistance Program.</p>
70.	ESSAY	<p>What are your plans to improve the local schools in your ward?</p>
71.	ESSAY	<p>How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public school teacher pension?</p> <p>The city’s four employee pension funds have been called a “ticking time bomb,” with Mayor Daley’s pension commission predicting that the four funds will run out of money in 20 years. “There is no low- or no-cost solution to this problem,” the commission wrote in a report. “Deferring action is not a viable option.” I have a plan that works to bring the pension funds to solvency.</p> <p>I believe that once an employee starts paying into a pension program, the benefits should be clear and concrete. As a lawyer, I also believe that the equitable (and legal) thing to do is to honor the originally “fully negotiated agreement.” But these Pension programs need to become properly funded, and I would support identifying a</p>

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			dedicated revenue source strictly to replenish our depleted pension funds. As a last resort, and in a worst case scenario, I could support reduced benefits for future employees based on negotiations and conversations with organized labor that provides for everyone's needs. It's important to work together to responsibly solve our financial problems while protecting the rights of our working class.
ENVIRONMENT			
72.	x		Will you vote for the Clean Power Ordinance?
73.		x	Will you vote to privatize Chicago's water delivery system?
74.	x		Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago public schools?
75.	x		Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago restaurants and food delivery services?
76.	x		Will you vote to adopt the water quality standards recommended by the Pollution Control Board?
77.	ESSAY		What should the City do to encourage and implement alternative forms of energy?
78.	ESSAY		What other environmental initiatives, if any, do you propose?
PARKS			
79.	x		Do you support election of the Chicago Park District Board?
80.		x	Do you support increased privatization of park facilities and services?
	ESSAY		Why or why not?
81.	x		Do you support prioritization of land acquisition and capital improvements first to those neighborhoods which are underserved by existing facilities?
TRANSPORTATION			
82.	x		Will you vote to increase the City subsidy to the CTA?
83.	Rank 1-5 or say no to any		Please indicate which CTA expansion plans, if any, you support and rank them in order of priority (1 highest)
	2		Red Line south to 130th Street
	1		Orange Line to Ford City Mall
	3		Downtown Circulator
	4		Downtown-O'Hare Express
			Other – please specify
		YES	NO
84.	x		Do you support renegotiation of Chicago's parking meter privatization deal?
85.		x	Do you support privatization of Midway Airport?
86.	x		Do you support the O'Hare expansion plan?
CRIMINAL JUSTICE			
87.		x	Is 911 response time adequate?
	ESSAY		If not, how can it be improved?
88.	x		Are there inequities in 911 service in your ward?
	ESSAY		If so, what can be done to redress them?
89.	x		Do you support re-allocating police services from low-crime to high-crime neighborhoods?
90.	ESSAY		What changes, if any, would you suggest for the CAPS program?

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91.	x		Will you vote for more funding for alternative crime prevention programs such as Cease Fire?
92.	ESSAY		What measures will you support to stop the schools to prison pipeline?
93.	x		Do you support gun control?
94.	ESSAY		What measures, if any, should the City Council adopt in response to recent court decisions striking down Chicago's handgun ban?
95.	x		Will you vote to order the City to stop paying legal fees and attempt to recover past legal costs of city employees implicated in the Police Board findings of misconduct related to the Burge case?
96.	ESSAY		Please share your views regarding the functioning of the Independent Police Review Authority and whether it should operate more independently of the Police Department.
CIVIL RIGHTS			
97.	x		Do you support affirmative action based on race, gender and sexual orientation in establishing criteria for hiring and promoting public employees?
98.	x		Do you support affirmative action as a criteria in letting city contracts?
99.	ESSAY		Please comment on current participation of individuals with disabilities in city hiring and contracts.
100.	ESSAY		Please comment on current women and minority participation in city hiring and contracts. Be sure your comments include firefighter and police officer recruitment and promotion.
101.	x		Do you favor restructuring the wage scale of city employees to institute gender-equal pay for jobs of comparable worth?
102.	x		Will you vote to require all City vendors and contractors to provide spousal benefits for same-sex partners of their employees?
103.	x		Will you vote for the Municipal ID ordinance?
	ESSAY		Why or why not?
ALDERMANIC PRIORITIES			
104.	ESSAY		What employment, if any, other than alderman, do you intend to hold?
105.	ESSAY		How will you divide your time between your aldermanic duties and your other occupation?
106.	ESSAY		Please specify the minimum hours per week you will spend performing your aldermanic duties.
107.	ESSAY		Please describe your service office staffing plan, including the number of staff, full and part time, how you will pay for them, and the number of hours per week that your service office will be open.
108.	ESSAY		What services need improvement in your ward? How will you achieve this?
109.	ESSAY		What are your top priorities for the Ward?
110.	ESSAY		How will you work with community groups and residents on City matters?