

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 1

DATE **12/22/2014**

WARD **31st**

NAME **Sean C. Starr**

VOTING ADDRESS **2530 N. Springfield Chicago IL 60647**

HOME PHONE **773-368-9930** BUSINESS PHONE **312 609 0060**

CAMPAIGN ADDRESS **135 S. LaSalle Street Suite 3300 Chicago, IL 60603**

CAMPAIGN PHONE **312-609-0060** FAX **312-541-8991**

CAMPAIGN WEBSITE www.seanstarr.org EMAIL **sean@seanstarr.org**

CAMPAIGN MANAGER **DNA**

NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED **Approximately 1300** NUMBER REQUIRED **574**

Please provide the following background information:

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

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

C. What is your primary occupation? **Attorney**

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

Outside of engagement with my neighbors and neighborhood on a primarily individual level, my civic activities have been somewhat lacking. I've been a college English professor the last ten years— primarily at Columbia College Chicago, so I have dedicated a lot of my free time to my students. I also put myself through law school and have been an attorney since 2010. I've been a member of the Chicago Bar Association, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, and the American Bar Association.

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

I believe my interpersonal people skills will be most helpful to me in office. However, I also have a MA in English and a JD with an international certificate, and I believe each lends well to requirements of the office. I have studied labor employment law, human rights, art, women studies, geopolitics, and literature extensively. I am an attorney and a college English professor. In both professions, I have gained extensive experience working with diverse individuals with unique skill sets and complex problems. I have become as adept at working with labor organizations, like the Fraternal Order of

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 1

Police, as I have with eighteen year old inner city kids beginning their freshman year in college. Having a legal background will aid me extensively in terms of voting on City legislation, but the experiences with people I have cultivated as a lawyer and teacher will serve me best in office.

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

I have very little political experience.

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

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 am running because I believe that Chicago's leaders—including the incumbent in my Ward--have moved decidedly away for representing the interests of the common man and woman. The middle and working class are where my priorities lay. Both of my opponents who officially made the ballot are big-money political machine candidates. I am an independent candidate running on a progressive, populist platform.

I am running for the people of the 31st Ward and the people of Chicago. My primary focus is on improving the City's' public schools. The more resources we put into Chicago's schools, the more resources our children will have to not only succeed in, but also help shape the future that awaits them. Likewise, public safety has to be a community effort. If Chicagoans cannot live in their communities without fear, then they do not have a community to live in. Additionally, ensuring that the City has affordable housing is of high importance to me. If Chicago cannot keep its residents in their communities, then Chicago will not have communities at all. Finally, the City's economy must be developed. If Chicago does not concentrate on developing its employment rates, its economy will never grow. All of these are independent issues. But if Chicago does not have aldermen/women who focus on them interdependently, the entire city will suffer.

I am also running because the City of Chicago needs a stronger City Council. Aldermen should have a significant influence on important policy matters. Too many current aldermen are afraid to make waves. As a result, the mayor's office becomes the only voice in the room. We already have seen what this can result in: a 75 year long bad contract for the parking meters, TIF money siphoned out of the neighborhoods into the pockets of private downtown developers, and the red light ticket fiasco are only some examples of what can happen when a weak City Council does not stand up for the people of Chicago.

I am also running to fight for the public employees, the undocumented Americans, the minimum wage earners, and any other underrepresented group currently under attack from the upper class. I firmly believe that the City Council has a responsibility to represent and put the middle and working class people in this City first. These people are the heart and soul of the greatest city in the world.

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 1

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

I think I can win this election with \$10,000. I have raised \$4500 so far. We are, needless to say, grassroots. What I am lacking in money, I have been thus far able to make up in human capital and a strong marketplace of organizational/strategy ideas.

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

This is my first political campaign. However, I have done my homework. I began by forming an exploratory committee that consisted of Logan Square and 31st Ward community members, attorneys, and several artists and creative-types. Steve Art, an attorney at the firm of Loevy & Loevy, acts as my big-picture campaign legal adviser on a volunteer basis. Paul Geiger, the former in house general counsel at the Fraternal Order of Police acts as my day-to-day campaign adviser on a volunteer basis. Ron Dahms, my law partner, functions as campaign secretary and financial advisor on a volunteer basis. We have a New York-based graphic designer, Christy-Claire Katien, who provides volunteer design help. Likewise, Joe and Joe Media LLC, a media and technology firm helped create my website, seanstarr.org. We have approximately twenty-five (25) volunteers (some Spanish and Polish speakers included) working for us in some capacity. In addition to volunteering from time to time, my wife and family provide a much needed reservoir of moral support. Everyone thus far involved in the campaign is either a long-time friend, a concerned citizen who lives in the ward, or a former student of mine.

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

Most questions on this questionnaire can be answered by checking either YES or NO. Others are essay questions and 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?
2.	ESSAY		What reforms are necessary in the City Council's committee rules and structure?
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 necessitating 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.			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
	X		The Independent Progressive Caucus
			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.
18.	ESSAY		Who are your top 5 contributors and how much has each contributed to your campaign?
19.			What changes would you support to the redistricting process?

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

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

			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		What additional revenue sources, if any, would you propose?
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.
30.	ESSAY		What measures will you vote for to reform the city pension plan and ensure its solvency?
31.	ESSAY		How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public employee pensions?
32.	Choose One		Should discretionary funds for ward services and infrastructure improvements be allocated
			in equal amounts to each ward
		X	based on the size of each ward
		X	based on the needs of each ward
	YES	NO	
33.	X		Will you institute participatory budgeting to allow ward residents to vote on discretionary spending in your ward?
PRIVATIZATION			
34.	ESSAY		Which city services or assets, if any, do you believe should be privatized and what is your criteria?
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?
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?
PLANNING, ZONING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
39.	ESSAY		How will you involve ward residents in planning?
40.	ESSAY		What is your long-range plan for development of the ward?
41.	ESSAY		What criteria do you or will you use in determining 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?
43.	X		Will you vote to terminate a TIF if the objectives of the TIF plan have been

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

			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?
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?
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		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?
53.	ESSAY		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?
54.	ESSAY		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?
55.	ESSAY		What measures will you support to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals and families who are not served by any existing programs?
	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

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

EDUCATION			
62.	Choose One	Which of the following options for choosing the School Board do you support?	
X		Popular Election	
		Mayoral appointment from nominations made by community representatives	
		Maintaining the current system of Mayoral appointment	
		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		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.
69.	ESSAY		What should the City do to improve the quality of all local schools?
70.	ESSAY		What are your plans to improve the local schools in your ward?
71.	ESSAY		How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public school teacher pension?
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			

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

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)
	3		Red Line south to 130th Street
	4		Orange Line to Ford City Mall
	5		Downtown Circulator
	2		Downtown-O'Hare Express
	1		Other – please specify: Expanded service schedule in underserved areas
	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?
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.			Do you support affirmative action based on race, gender and sexual orientation in establishing criteria for hiring and promoting public employees?
98.			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?

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

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?

ESSAY ANSWERS

City Council Committee Reforms

I think the rule that only a quorum need be present for the Council to proceed is a dangerous loophole that needs to be closed—at least regarding legislation that affects any large number of Chicagoans. I also think the rule that allows 2/3 of the alderman to suspend all the City Council’s Rules of Order and Procedure also should be reevaluated.

Public Financing of Municipal Campaigns

I don’t support public financing of municipal campaigns because I believe that public officials are elected to run City government and not campaign. My political contributions have thus far been small. The largest donation I have received is \$500 which I received from four separate individuals, two of which were friends and two of which were family members. My top five are as follows:

1. Sharon Starr \$500
2. Steve Scheff \$500
3. Bruce Johnson \$500
4. Bob Ranqisit \$500
5. Mitch Josim \$350

Redistricting

As stated above, I would support any ordinance that requires redistricting of the wards to be based on non-partisan criteria and not to benefit any specific individual or political party. Furthermore, I would support redistricting that keeps neighborhoods together. Some of the wards are clearly cut to benefit certain individuals instead of entire communities.

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

Revenue

I am willing to support generating revenues through higher taxes and fees to maintain and improve vital public services, provided a proper analysis and accounting is done to ensure such increases positively impact the largest number of Chicagoans. Towards these I support the following:

- ✓ I am wholeheartedly in favor of reforming the TIFs back into the public schools, city services, and pensions. The TIF system needs fixing. TIF money should be used—at least in part—to alleviate some of pension burden the City faces, instead of being used to build hotels or basketball stadiums;
- ✓ Raising the city's portion of the property tax levy;
- ✓ Broadening sales tax on certain services;
- ✓ Instituting a city income tax—but only under certain clearly delineated circumstances—in particular in the form of a “fair and progressive income tax” that would help to narrow the gap between the excessively wealthy and the rest of society
- ✓ Instituting a sales tax on large scale financial transactions;
- ✓ Instituting a 1% commuter income tax would benefit the people who make the decision to live *and* work in Chicago;
- ✓ Any legislation designed to make corporations bear the brunt of a waning economy instead of individuals. Eliminating or shrinking corporate subsidies to offset the pension crisis would be step in the right direction.

Pensions

I would oppose any attempt to diminish pension benefits of retired, current or future employees of the City of Chicago. I would likewise oppose any attempt to replace the defined benefit pension plans for City employees with defined contribution plans. I am staunchly in favor of public employees receiving the pensions they were promised. In step with that, I will support efforts to maintain a program of affordable health care for City retirees. As outside counsel for the FOP, I wrote the FOP's amicus brief in anticipation of pension litigation. I likewise drafted a set of talking points to make it easier for the FOP administration to communicate with its members regarding the pension situation and their respective rights. While the FOP has not yet needed to enter into any lawsuits, the election of Bruce Rauner underscores the need for all of organized labor to be ready to respond to any legal attacks on their clearly delineated pension rights. Illinois Circuit Court Judge John Belz's decision on Friday, Nov. 21, 2014—albeit a short term win—reaffirmed my conviction that the State of Illinois and City of Chicago need to find alternative sources of revenue for the grossly underfunded retirement systems.

Contemporary attacks on the public employee pension system are an attempt to destabilize the middle and working classes. When the Illinois Constitutional Convention amended the State Constitution in 1970 to include Article XIII, Section 5, it did so to ensure that the state would not renege on pension obligations to public employees during a financial crisis. Over the last several years, amidst a recession and continuing economic uncertainty, lawmakers and special interest groups have attempted to reinterpret the Pension Clause. The Pension Clause, however, provides a narrow constitutional guarantee: pension system members have an enforceable contractual right to benefits that cannot be unilaterally reduced without consent and consideration. While Illinois courts have said that pensioners cannot sue the State to guarantee funding levels, those same courts have consistently found that pensioners have a right to sue in the event funding levels default or approach default status, as Belz's decision reiterates. Current employees' benefits cannot be reduced in order to relieve Illinois' pension liabilities and if those liabilities are as severe as pension reformers would have the public believe, pensioners have a right to sue the state in circuit court to ensure their benefits.

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

Chicago needs to find alternative sources of revenue for the grossly underfunded retirement systems.

I would support using some of the unused TIF funds to fund the pension liability. Likewise, I would be in support of a fair and equitable tax designed to ease the pension burden.

Privatization

I would strongly oppose any legislation or budget measures that privatize or encourage privatizing public services and assets. The privatization of the City of Chicago is destabilizing the essential structure of the City both literally and figuratively. Privatization chips away at the core middle and working class and replaces it with poor alternatives making the City an unsafe and more expensive place to live. I completely support a Privatization Transparency and Accountability Ordinance that puts decisions into City Council hands and takes them away from the Mayor. I do not support further privatization of public assets.

I would support a City ordinance designed to independently and publically determine proposed privatization deals. I would completely oppose any sale or lease of the City water system. Lake Michigan is a public resource. Given that and the City's horrible track record of privatization deals, I cannot see myself ever supporting this. Before voting on privatization contracts, I would advocate for an independent analysis of any privatization deal that ensures that they deliver the maximum return, they are in the best interests of the city for the long term, and are free of patronage concerns.

Planning, Zoning, and Development

I plan to involve my constituents from the ward in the day to day governance of the ward. I believe each member of the community is a key person in our community. As I collected signatures on my petitions to be put on the ballot, I covered a lot of ground and met hundreds of community members. By personally hitting the streets and connecting with the residents, I was able to learn a great deal about the ideas and concerns that are most important to the middle and working class people I hope to represent. I want to make improvements subject to a participatory ward vote. I plan to have an open door policy that encourages community engagement and participation. I plan to encourage development in the ward that does not displace the long-time residents. I also plan to have a system in place that encourages business development that hires residents from the ward.

Housing

I will advocate for legislation that guarantees some of the foreclosed properties saved through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program are made affordable to families at 40% and 60% of AMI. I likewise plan to work with individual developers, housing advocates, community activists to encourage affordable development in my ward. I have already begun this process. I will also advocate on behalf and push legislation that promotes safeguards of SRO's and other low income housing in my ward.

Education

Public education is a fundamental pillar of any egalitarian society. School closings destroy communities, derail student education, and create career crises for teachers. I would support anything that requires CPS to study and present their findings regarding school closing before they actually close any schools. Renaissance 2010 was a failure. The scores from the elementary schools created by Renaissance 2010 were almost the same as the city average, and scores at the remade high schools were below the city average. The public schools can be

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

improved. In addition to full funding, we need stable principals, programs that more involve parents, and we must ask the teachers what can be done to help the current system.

I believe my track record demonstrates that I am committed to supporting public education. To begin with, my mother has been a CPS teacher for over 25 years, and my wife is a CPS teacher as well. As such, I am intimately aware of the circumstances and challenges CTU members face in order to perform their jobs. I am cognizant that their “jobs” are much more than a matter of employment. Public education is a fundamental American resource, and teaching is as difficult a calling as there is. I marched with my wife and her fellow teachers during the 2012 strike to demand elimination of high-stakes testing, decreased class size, and increased emphasis on the arts. Finally, I met several CTU members on the ground in my ward while going door to door. The majority shared my concern with the ward’s current leadership, in particular as it applied to the drastic underfunding of public schools. Several members expressed their belief that the City (and our alderman) was starving these schools in hopes that, once enrollment dropped low enough, they would be subject to closing, and in turn, pave the way for charter or alternative schools. I am *not* in favor of charter schools.

The school closings, a democratically elected school board, budgetary problems, and overcrowded classrooms all should be subject of legislation designed to put public education back at the center of the public conversation. This, more than anything else, is what I have heard from the constituents; they have overwhelmingly described to me feeling as though they have been left out of the public conversation by current City leadership. If elected, I intend to work to install legislation that includes everyone in the conversation. I support an elected school board and adding a binding question regarding elected school boards to the ballot in the next election cycle. I would actively support proposals that would return more TIF funds CPS for use as operating funds. TIF money could help close so many of the existing gaps in public education. This is a central tenet of my campaign. I promise to fight to redirect TIF funds back into the public schools.

Environment

Chicago should encourage and implement environmental conservation through city ordinances designed to curb waste, limit use of fossil fuels, reward alternative energy users with tax incentives, and encourage recycling efforts. Mayor Emanuel’s environmental program seems to be one of his few good ideas.

Criminal Justice

911 response time is not sufficient in the Chicago in general and is certainly not adequate in my ward. I am wholly in favor of using more of the budget to hire more police officers. More officers on beats and greater police presence will provide better response time and help curb crime before it occurs. I would like CAPS to be more integrated and work harder to make their information available to everyone in the community via social media. Likewise, I want to encourage strengthening relationships between police and the community in order to build more trustful, reciprocal relationships. This can start on the CAPs level, but should develop beyond that setting. In order to accomplish this, I will advocate for more integration with beat officers and community members on social media. I strongly support gun control. I will advocate for alternative solutions for the City Council in order to keep handguns out of the City. There are multiple bureaucratic solutions that could be utilized to keep guns out of peoples’ hands.

In terms of the Independent Police Review Authority, I worked for the better part of the last four years representing police officers on behalf of the Fraternal Order of Police. As such, I spent a lot of time at IPRA dealing with their investigators and supervisors. In my experience, IPRA is independent of the police department. I never got the idea that they were anything but separate from the officers I represented.

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 2

Civil Rights

I would support developing an inclusive plan that provides more opportunities for minority owned firms. I will work tirelessly to push legislation that directly benefits all people. Public employment is a basic building block of a functioning society and must be protected and maintained. City Council members are elected for a variety of reasons—among them, to draft legislation that positively impacts the residents in their ward. From all reports, the Mayor’s office has been the primary source of all legislation being currently drafted at City Hall. If elected, I will change that. My presence will provide another former litigator to the growing group of progressive alderman. I will advocate and lobby fully for legislation that supports hiring of minority owned firms.

I support a municipal ID program because these IDs can function as a valuable tool for undocumented Americans to accomplish everyday tasks like opening getting access to their child’s school or daycare. They also work to acknowledge the participation and contributions of marginalized communities. They likewise can help protect transgendered people that struggle to obtain IDs that reflect their unique status.

Aldermanic Priorities

If elected, I plan to commit to working full-time as an alderman. I will strive to balance my home life—I have a wife and nine month old baby daughter—with the responsibility of serving my community and my city. I plan to spend at minimum 40 hours a week working as an alderman, but more realistically think that I will be working upwards of 60 hours. My service office will 9 am until 7pm M-W, from 10am – 10pm on Thursday, 11am-5pm on Friday and 12pm – 3pm on Saturday. I plan to hire between one and three people to start. I will pay them a competitive rate based on their responsibilities and experience—I will most certainly pay them a family wage.

More than anything, the people I meet tell that they feel as though our ward has been “left out of the conversation” when it comes to city policy and development. I plan to change that by including them in the decisions my office makes. My ward’s schools need to be put at the center of the community. The current alderman and the Mayor’s office are starving the schools and no one wants to send their kids to them anymore. Public safety is a priority in my ward. I will work to make public safety a community effort. Affordable housing needs to be developed in my ward. The foreclosure crush adversely affected many of my ward’s constituents. Finally, economic development needs to occur in my ward. My constituents consistently tell me that they want more restaurants, grocery options, shops, and bars in the ward that they can walk to and shop at. They also want more employment options. I plan to make both these desires a reality.

My ward needs a lot of service improvements. Cracked sidewalks, rats, potholes, and graffiti, just to name a few, litter my ward. I plan to work with the community to address these problems. I will put service improvements to a vote in my ward to ensure that what gets done is what the community deems most important.