

RESPONSE TO 2004 METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION
DISTRICT
IVI-IPO QUESTIONNAIRE
SECTION 1

Date: January 8, 2004 **Party:** Democratic
Name: Gloria Alitto Majewski
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Campaign Manager: Gloria Alitto Majewski
Number of Petition Signatures Filed: 22,000 **Number Required:** 5,154

A) ELECTIVE OR APPOINTIVE PUBLIC AND/OR PARTY OFFICES
PREVIOUSLY HELD INCLUDING DA

Elected Commissioner of Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
in 1984 for a two year term.
Elected Commissioner of Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
in 1986 for a six year term.
Elected Commissioner of Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
in 1992 for a six year term.
Elected Commissioner of Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
in 1998 or a six-year term.

B) OTHER ELECTIVE OFFICES FOR WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN A
CANDIDATE.

I have never been a candidate for any other office.

C) PRINCIPAL BUSINESS, EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL AND CIVIC
ACTIVITIES OF THE PAST TEN YEARS.

2003-Present – Volunteer, W.I.T.S. Program (Working in the Schools
Program)

2000-Present – Participant in the “Principal for a Day” program for Chicago Public Schools. Received Certificate of Recognition for involvement in program.

1997-Present – Member, Board of Directors of the Ground Hog Club

1997 – Appointed MWRD liaison to Illinois Association of Wastewater Agencies

1995-Present - Serve as Chairman of Finance for the MWRD

1993 - Bestowed “Humanitarian of the Year Award” from The Gregorians, an organization concerned with cultural pursuits, professional growth, political and community involvement

1984-2001 - Member of Board of Directors of New Horizon Center for the Developmentally Disabled

1984-Present - Commissioner, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD)

D) WHAT SUBJECTS HAVE YOU STUDIED AND WHAT EXPERIENCE HAVE YOU HAD WHICH WILL BE MOST HELPFUL TO YOU IN THE OFFICE YOU SEEK.

Having the opportunity to work with the excellent professional and technical staff of the MWRD, my responsibility as a Commissioner has been to understand and endorse the policies that best serve all residents that live and work in Cook County. Fully aware that District operations are dependent on appropriate policy decisions coupled with financially sound management of monetary resources, I have gained valuable experience in both of those arenas as a member of the Board of Commissioners and as Chairman of Finance. I visit our treatment plants to meet with employees and observe our daily operations, have been active in appearing before community groups, school children, civic and social organizations to explain our importance in protecting the environment and health of residents. This has been an effective bridge between the public and the MWRD.

E) ACTIVITIES FOR OTHER CANDIDATES. PLEASE BE SPECIFIC.

Although I am not involved in any type of activity for other candidates, I intend to continue a dialog with all persons concerned with and working to improve the environment for all residents of Cook County.

F) PLEASE LIST ALL ENDORSEMENTS YOU HAVE RECEIVED SO FAR.

Chicago Federation of Labor AFL-CIO
Chicago & Cook County Building & Construction Trades Council
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers

Cook County Democratic Party
41st Ward Regular Democratic Organization
38th Ward Regular Democratic Organization
36th Ward Regular Democratic Organization
34th Ward Regular Democratic Organization
50th Ward Regular Democratic Organization
Office of the Mayor, Village of Chicago Ridge
Office of the Mayor, Village of Worth
Italian American Political Coalition
Polish National Alliance

G) AS CONCISELY AS POSSIBLE, STATE WHY YOU FEEL YOU SHOULD BE ENDORSED OVER THE OTHER CANDIDATES. WHAT GOALS FOR THE OFFICE YOU SEEK ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU PERSONALLY?

As a full-time Commissioner, holding no other office or position, I have had the opportunity to become familiar with all phases of District operations. As an elected Board member with the responsibility to set policy and approve expenditures, I am dedicated to promote policies that best serve all the taxpayers of Cook County.

With changing demands and regulations, future resource availability must be considered in planning for potential needs of all communities. I feel the District must address the following factors:

- Completion of the McCook Reservoir and Thornton Composite Reservoir.
- Address future issues that will have major impact on treatment plant operations that would result in reducing overall maintenance and energy consumption with no degradation to the effluent quality.
- Take necessary steps in working with the IEPA and other scientific partners to develop and achieve water quality standards for District waterways.

H) PLEASE OUTLINE THE PLACE OF PATRONAGE, PERSONNEL CODES, RACE, GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN ESTABLISHING CRITERIA FOR HIRING AND PROMOTING PUBLIC EMPLOYEES.

The 2004 projected total of District employees is 2161 people; that number includes 919 represented employees, 64 exempt positions, the remainder are civil service positions. The Personnel Rules for the Classified Service of the MWRD were adopted on December 18, 1965. The purpose of the Rules is to make effective the Statute providing for a merit system of personnel administration and creating the Department of Personnel and the Civil Service Board. A copy of the Personnel Rules which explains in full detail the hiring and promotional practices for the District may be obtained if needed for further information.

I) WHAT IS YOUR CAMPAIGN BUDGET? HOW MUCH HAVE YOU RAISED TO DATE?

My current campaign budget is approximately \$50,000.00. In 2003, I have raised approximately \$30,000.00. A copy of my Campaign Disclosure form may be obtained from the Cook County Clerk's Office.

J) HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE ON YOUR CAMPAIGN STAFF? HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS ARE ON YOUR LIST?

There are approximately 15 people who have volunteered to work on my re-election campaign.

GLORIA ALITTO MAJEWSKI

**REPSONSE TO 2004 METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT
IVI-IPO QUESTIONNAIRE
SECTION 2**

1. SHOULD THE WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT BE A SEPARATE SPECIAL GOVERNMENT UNIT OR SHOULD IT BE SUBORDINATE TO THE COUNTY BOARD?

I have always felt, and continue to believe, for a number of reasons, that the District should be a separate unit of government and should not be subordinate to or placed under the jurisdiction of the Cook County Board government. The District, as it is currently governed and managed, is nationally recognized as one of the most efficient and effective agencies of its kind in the nation. The District's treatment plants meet or exceed discharge standards 99.9% of the time, TARP is cleaning up our inland waterways and the District performs those responsibilities at the lowest cost per gallon of wastewater treated in the nation.

2. SHOULD COMMISSIONERS BE ELECTED (a)AT-LARGE, (b)BY DISTRICT, (c)BY CUMULATIVE VOTING?

Commissioners should continue to be elected at-large in our service area, which includes almost all of Cook County. We are a single purpose unit of government. The Board approaches our water environment on a regional basis to set the policy for the benefit of all the citizens in the county. If each commissioner represented a "District" then, in my opinion, we would have nine different agendas and very little would be beneficial to the citizens of this county. The collection and treatment of wastewater is based on the hydrology and drainage characteristics of the region which does not adhere to political boundaries.

3. DO YOU HAVE A BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP WITH ANY ENTITY DOING BUSINESS WITH THE MWRD OR OTHER GOVERNMENTAL BODIES IN COOK COUNTY?

I do not have a business relationship with any entity doing business with the MWRD or other government bodies in Cook County or elsewhere.

4. WILL YOU ACCEPT OR HAVE YOU ACCEPTED CAMPAIGN DONATIONS FROM CURRENT OR POTENTIAL SUPPLIERS OR EMPLOYEES OF THE DISTRICT?

The campaign donations I receive come from friends, family and labor organizations. When I have a fundraiser, I send complimentary tickets to a few employees. There have been instances when I have received checks from some employees buying one or two tickets. I limit donations from suppliers to a fixed figure and in some cases have returned donations if I feel it would be inappropriate to accept.

5. (a)IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE DISTRICT CONTRACT FOR OUTSIDE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES? (b)IN WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD COMPETITIVE BIDDING FOR CONTRACTS BE REQUIRED? (c)PLEASE COMMENT ON ANY EXISTING ABUSES.

Outside professional services should only be utilized by the District when District staff cannot perform the work most cost effectively and the work is either specialized in nature, seasonal or an operating emergency. In all cases, competitive bidding should be required unless only one source for product materials or services exists. The bid process is well defined by statute and by the policies of the Board of Commissioners. I am not aware of any circumstances where the bid process is being abused

6. SHOULD MWRD TRADESPERSONS BE PAID THE PREVAILING WAGE RATE?

Yes, I believe District tradespersons should be paid prevailing wages. We are a highly technical agency and need trained skilled tradespeople to maintain and operate our facilities.

7. DO YOU FAVOR PERMITTING MWRD EMPLOYEES TO HOLD OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT CONCURRENTLY?

I do not favor allowing MWRD employees being able to hold other public sector employment while employed at this agency.

8. DO YOU FAVOR PERMITTING MWRD EMPLOYEES TO HAVE OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT OR CONTRACTS WITH ENTITIES WHICH DO BUSINESS WITH THE DISTRICT?

I do not favor permitting MWRD employees to have employment or contracts with entities who do business with this agency.

9. IS THE DISTRICT IN GOOD FINANCIAL CONDITION? PLEASE COMMENT ON BOTH EXPENDITURES AND SOURCES OF REVENUES.

In 2003, the District received an upgrade in its bond ratings, a first for this agency, to: Fitch AAA, Moody's Aaa, Standard & Poors AA+. These bond ratings are an indication of the District's excellent financial condition. This was achieved in light of the downturn

in the economy. Subject to the State of Illinois property tax cap, we must closely monitor expenditures and have achieved economies via modernization of our facilities and equipment. Since 1995 we have reduced staffing by ten percent. Property tax revenues, while limited by the tax cap, have been and continue to be, extremely reliable. Our non-property tax revenues (user charges, permit fees) have been negatively impacted by the downturn in the economy but we have managed to maintain all service levels and fund balances by way of operating economies.

10. (a)WHAT SHOULD BE THE MWRD’S ROLE IN POLICY ON LAKEFRONT, RIVERFRONT AND CANAL DEVELOPMENT? (b)WHAT RESPONSIBILITY SHOULD IT HAVE FOR PLANNING OR MONITORING SUCH DEVELOPMENT?

The District has adopted a waterway strategy for its lands. A sixty-foot water’s edge green space is included in leases to encourage public access. Waterway lands, not under District ownership, are regulated by the local communities. Many communities have followed the District’s lead and adopted waterway ordinances that provide public access and green space.

11. (a)DO YOU SUPPORT PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE CHICAGO RIVER AND SHOULD ACCESS BE A PRIORITY FOR THE MWRD (?) (b)DO YOU SUPPORT THE RECENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE DISTRICT AND THE PROPERTY OWNERS ON THE NORTH BRANCH OF THE RIVER (?)

The District’s waterway strategy adopted more than 20 years ago emphasizes public access to waterways and we encourage recreational use of lands. Canoe and boat launches on our lands provide direct public access to the waterways. Our sixty-foot green space beautifies the water’s edge and will ultimately provide for a trail along the waterways.

The policies we have adopted for the North Branch are fair to the public and the adjacent landowners. Unfortunately, the landowners have not accepted the agreement and the District will pursue the matter in an eviction action.

12. ARE PRESENT SYSTEMS FOR MONITORING AND ELIMINATING WATER POLLUTION FROM INDUSTRIAL AND DOMESTIC WASTE ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE?

The District has a strong Industrial Waste Ordinance and we have field surveillance employees who closely monitor industrial discharges. Adequacy of the present systems for monitoring and elimination of industrial and domestic waste is manifested by the fact that the District’s bio-solids are rated for the highest possible recycling and re-use acceptable to USEPA requirements.

13. SHOULD THE MWRD ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOLID AND OTHER WASTES IN ADDITION TO ITS CURRENT RESPONSIBILITIES TO PREVENT

WATER POLLUTION? IF SO, WHAT SHOULD BE THE SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND HOW SHOULD IT BE EXERCISED?

I do not feel the MWRD should assume responsibility for solid waste. Instead we should broaden our responsibilities to manage stormwater in Cook County. This is a more natural extension of the District's pollution control efforts and an area currently neglected. Current statutes assign responsibility for Cook County stormwater planning and management to a consortium of planning councils. The diverse nature, responsibilities and limitation of technical and financial resources of these organizations make it difficult to address this regional issue. The District, with its regional responsibilities for pollution control and its history as the local sponsor for millions of dollars of flood control projects, is an ideal resource for taking responsibility for Cook County stormwater management.

My vision is an umbrella organization of watershed planning councils made up of municipal representatives working with the District to address stormwater problems in Cook County. Tax revenues raised by the District will fund these councils and all projects.

14. HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF FLOODING AND POLLUTION BEFORE TARP IS COMPLETED?

The District now has 102 of 109 miles of tunnel operating. The tunnels are completely mined and capture the first flush of pollution. Improvements in water quality and aquatic life have been substantial.

In 1998, the Army Corps of Engineers completed construction of the O'Hare Reservoir. The District assumed its operation and to date the reservoir has yielded \$61 million in flood damage reduction benefits to the communities it serves. The Thornton Transitional Reservoir has already worked effectively in the south suburbs. Until the completion of TARP, the District will continue to monitor and manage the waterway system.

The District is diligently working with Congress and the Corps of Engineers to expedite completion of the reservoirs

15. WHAT PRECAUTIONS, IF ANY, DO YOU BELIEVE SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT SURROUNDING THE TARP WASTEWATER RESERVOIRS?

The Corps of Engineers has studied the operation of the reservoirs and conducted an Environmental Impact Study. Included in their analysis are protective measures for groundwater and aeration of the reservoir waters. The District has operated the O'Hare CUP Reservoir for several years and has not received any odor complaints when the reservoir has been in use. The Thornton and McCook Reservoirs are larger and will store water in much the same manner as O'Hare. Operating under the parameters approved by the Corps of Engineers for groundwater and storage, we expect no complaints from the public.

