

IVI-IPO 2012 WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 1

DATE 12/22/2011

PARTY: Democrat

NAME: Stella Black

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CAMPAIGN MANAGER: Liz Caldwell

NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED: 16,200 NUMBER REQUIRED: 5,586

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

1981 - Centralia Township Assessor

1985 – Re-elected as Centralia Township Assessor

B) Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate.

1986 – Candidate for State Representative

2010 – Candidate for MWRD

C) What is your primary occupation?

Property Tax Consultant

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

Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

Shedd Aquarium B.O.S.S. Advisory Board

Chicago Association of Realtors

Appraisal Institute

State Treasurers Community Affairs Council – Co-chair

Chair of NAWBO- PAC

Wetlands Research Board Member

Neumann Family Service Board Member

NAWBO Liaison to the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

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

Masters Degree in Public Administration

Labor Law Certificate

Real Estate Brokers License

S.R.A. Designation with the Appraisal Institute

Master's Thesis on Environmental Clean Up Recovery Act

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

Precinct work, fundraising and voter outreach for the following candidates:

Debbie Halverson

Senator Paul Simon

Senator Dick Durbin

Congresswoman Jan Shakowsky

Congressman Mike Quigley

Julie Hamos

John Cullerton

Tom Tunney

G) Please list all endorsements you have received so far.

Congresswoman Jan Shakowsky; Congressman Mike Quigley; City Clerk Susana Mendoza; State Representative Sara Feigenholtz; State Senator Kwame Raoul; Roland Burris; Evanston Mayor Elizabeth Tisdahl; Schaumburg Area Democrats; Indo American Democratic Organization; Mike Bauer; Roger Simon.

H) As concisely as possible, please 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 believe my life experience distinguishes me from the other candidates and is the reason I should be endorsed over others. From holding elected office to raising a family to owning my own successful business, I have acquired the ability to effectively manage and multi-task. My real estate and appraisal background will be invaluable in dealing with the property holdings of the District. My extensive property tax background will be a boon to the taxpayers of Cook County as I can effectively deal with properties leased by the District. This ability to oversee and manage the tax spending of the District sets me apart from the other candidates.

What matters to me the most personally is restoring and maintaining the quality of our water for my grandchildren and generations to come. To that end, my goals are to reduce MWRD's property tax burden and save money by improved management of the District's wide real estate holdings. I would establish a financial oversight committee to provide an independent examination of the way the District spends our tax dollars. It would also be a priority for me to prevent flooding and storm water run-off through establishing regional real estate standards for new developments honoring the unique needs of all municipalities. I would introduce water re-use measures that will reduce the amount of treated water flowing back into our lakes and rivers.

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

Budget: \$100,000 Raised: Aggressive Fundraising to begin January 1st.

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

IVI-IPO 2012 WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 2

1. Should Commissioners be elected at-large or by district?

Historically, there has been merit to the at-large election of Commissioners due to the county-wide nature of District responsibility for sewage treatment and water reclamation. The addition of storm water management to the list of District authorities, does raise questions about continuing with at-large elections. Flooding and storm water issues occur and are managed more locally and require study and projects at a watershed and sub-basin level and close coordination with municipal authorities within each watershed. Election by district would allow Commissioners to develop geographic expertise and create more accountability on that level.

2. Should cumulative voting be used to elect commissioners?

No.

3. Do you have a business relationship with or financial interest in any entity doing business with the MWRD or other governmental bodies in Cook County?

No.

4. Will you accept or have you accepted campaign donations from current or potential suppliers, employees or outside contractors of the district?

Yes I will accept donations from suppliers, employees or outside contractors. In my many years in business in Cook County, I have developed professional and personal relationships with a myriad of businesses, some of whom may do work or sell goods or services to the District.

5. a. In what circumstances should the District contract for outside professional services?

The District should contract for professional services when the capacity of District staff is exceeded. This would occur in instances where staff may not have the required expertise or where outside input might help train staff in that area of expertise or where the workload is such that outside help is required

b. In what circumstances should competitive bidding for contracts be required?

Licensed professional engineering services should be selected based on qualifications. Selections for construction services and other contracting services should be made in a competitive bidding process.

c. Please comment on any existing abuses.

I am unaware of any specific instances of abuse. However, the District needs to establish internal management and monitoring systems to avoid any conflict of interest or instances of special treatment being given. I would recommend a Committee of Commissioners to address any reported or perceived problems in a timely manner.

6. Do you support Patronage in hiring and promoting public employees?

No.

7. Will you support public postings of all permanent and temporary jobs at the District?

Yes.

8. Do you support Affirmative Action?

Yes. As a woman who has founded and owns her own business, I am very aware of historic and sometimes pervasive negative attitudes towards minority populations in our society. Until there truly is a level playing field, Affirmative Action should and must continue.

9. Do you favor permitting MWRD employees to hold other public sector employment concurrently?

No.

10. Do you favor permitting MWRD employees to have outside employment or contracts with entities which do business with the district?

Absolutely not.

11. Is the District in good financial condition? Please comment on both expenditures and sources of revenues.

Yes. Although the District has dependable sources of revenue, the budgets for all programs should be closely and regularly examined by the Board of Commissioners to ensure that any and all proposed expenditures are in line with appropriate policies and District responsibilities.

12. Under what circumstances would you support sale of MWRD property?

I would support the sale of excess property at fair market value.

13. a. What should be the MWRD's role in policy on lakefront, riverfront and canal development?

The District's role in lakefront, riverfront and canal development should be advisory to protect our natural resources from further degradation; regulatory to prevent dumping of contaminants into waterways; and should provide responsible maintenance as a landowner. The primary development role resides in the local municipalities. The District should regularly review its adopted waterway strategy to ensure continued relevance.

b. What responsibility should it have for planning or monitoring such development?

The District's technical expertise would be very helpful to the development process. District staff is familiar with federal, state and local statutes and regulations that would impact such planning.

14. Do you support expansion of the MWRD's role into areas of habitat restoration and conservance and creation of public parks and trails?

The Chicago Metropolitan region reaps huge recreational and scenic benefits from the lakefront parkways and trails. The MWRD needs to work closely with neighborhood organizations and community groups to offer support and expertise on any lakefront or riverfront development that benefits the community.

15. Do you support the existing agreement between the district and the property owners on the North Branch of the Chicago River?

The leases of riverfront properties (as well as all other District owned properties) should be reviewed before renewal to ensure that all terms and conditions are appropriate and consistent with District responsibilities and authorities. District riverfront property should be used for the purpose it was acquired to serve.

16. Do you think the MWRD should be required to remove phosphorus and nitrogen from the effluent it releases into our waterways?

Phosphorous and nitrogen are problems in the waterways of the region. The sources are often non-point and the impacts of such pollutants are regional in nature. There are regional solutions that may prove more cost effective than removal at the release point. The District should investigate a wide variety of methods for dealing with the impacts of the pollutants.

17. a. Are you for or against using green technologies to manage storm water?

I strongly support the use of green technologies in the management for storm water. Research about implementation of such technologies is still needed and the District could certainly be a leader in providing data and expertise. The District's storm water program provides an excellent opportunity for researching and supporting the use of green technologies. The District should work collaboratively with agencies to perfect the use of green storm water management technologies.

b. Do you think storm water should be preserved and protected?

Yes. Storm water is a natural resource and should be preserved and protected as such.

c. Please explain your answers.

MWRD serves a region with a growing population. The District's responsibilities are very important to the future of the region.

18. What can the MWRD do to exceed minimal requirements for permitting under the Clean Water Act?

The District can and should work closely with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. More stringent requirements for permitting can and should be enacted by the MWRD when it is deemed necessary for protecting our waterways.

19. What can be done to alleviate flooding in Chicago and the suburbs which persists despite the construction of TARP?

A common misperception in the region was that all flooding would end with the completion of TARP. The District's public outreach can continue to educate the public about the role of TARP and reasonable expectations regarding continued overbank flooding and storm water back-ups. In 2005, the District prepared a county-wide storm water plan. That plan has been adopted and implementation is underway. Watershed plans are being developed in consultation with municipal governments in the suburbs. An ordinance is under review to lessen the impacts of future development and re-development. The District should continue coordination with the City of Chicago, suburbs and adjacent counties to ensure maximum benefit from all regional projects. The District should pursue state and federal funding for qualifying projects to make the best use of local monies.

20. How should the MWRD implement the disinfection of effluent?

The MWRD voted 8-1 recently to install the disinfection technology at two of the three main water treatment plants. This is a good first step towards the goal of having our major waterways clean and safe enough for recreational activities.