

IVI-IPO 2012 WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 1

DATE December 18, 2011 PARTY: Democrat

NAME: Kari K. Steele

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CAMPAIGN MANAGER: Shari Newman

NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED: approx. 23,000 NUMBER REQUIRED: approx. 5,700

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

- None

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

- Just Commissioner for MWRD

C) What is your primary occupation?

- Chemist

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

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| Chairman of the Young Democrats of Cook County | June 2009 – June 2010 |
| Treasurer of the Young Democrats of Cook County | June 2008 - June 2009 |
| Member of the Young Democrats of America | 2005 - 2011 |
| Chairman of the 6 th Ward Young Democrats | 2004 - 2011 |
| Illinois Women's Institute of Leadership (IWIL) | 2007 - Present |
| The 6 th Ward New Democrats | Member |
| Society of Cosmetic Chemists | Member |
| Sierra Club | Member |
| Chatham Avalon Park Community Council | Member |
| Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. | Member |
| 8 th Ward Women's Auxiliary Council | Member |

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 received a chemistry pre-med degree, with a minor in biology in 1997. I have more than 11 years of experience as a Chemist. I'm currently a formulating Chemist for L'Oreal USA (Hair Products), and I have previous experience working at the Jardine Water Purification Plant (as a water chemist) and The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (as a water sampler & lab tech). My scientific background can be an asset to the board, since laboratory testing plays a major part in monitoring and regulating waste discharge. As the ecological demands upon the agency increase, a scientific background would be of great value in informing and guiding policy decisions of the Board. Additionally, while working as a Water Chemist at Jardine Water Purification Plant and at the Water Reclamation District I became familiar with the chemicals and testing used for water treatment. As a result, I could address and evaluate both the practical and professional implications of planned policy decisions.

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

- I have supported Judge John O. Steele and Alderman Freddrenna Lyle, by working on their campaign committees. I've supported President Barack Obama by contributing monetary donations, travelling to Indiana to canvas and distribute materials and being a part of the web Get Out the Vote activities. I also have contributed funds to numerous campaigns by purchasing event tickets.

-I have circulated petitions for candidates at the federal, state, and county level, including (but not limited to) John O. Steele, Freddrenna Lyle, Connie Howard, Bobby Rush, & Dick Durbin.

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

- I'm endorsed by the Cook County Democratic Party; and other endorsements are beginning to come in as many organizations and elected officials awaited the end of Petition filings.

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 feel I should be endorsed over the other candidates because of my scientific background, the professional experience I have as a Chemist and my actual work experience in the areas governed by the MWRD. I'm a Chemist and an Environmentalist, and I'm very involved in the community. I have a goal to educate everyone on ways they can help protect & preserve Lake Michigan. I feel we need more communities involved with water conservation and need to inform everyone about what the MWRD has to offer residents of Cook County to assist in this matter. If we educate everyone on Storm Water Management we can help reduce flooding and in turn improve our quality of water. I would also like to assist the district with developing ways to reduce the amount of energy used at treatment plants.

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

- \$100,000.00; I have raised almost \$30,000 to date.

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

- I have no paid campaign staffers at this time. I have about 40 – 50 volunteers on my list.

IVI-IPO 2012 WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 2

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

- I would favor Commissioners being elected by district because I think it would be a way to ensure all areas are represented.

2. Should cumulative voting be used to elect commissioners?

- Yes

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?

-No

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

-I think the district should contract for outside professional services only if there is no one currently working for the district that can fulfill the duty needed.

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

- I feel competitive bidding is fine when there are multiple bidders. Except circumstances were economically it wouldn't make since; like with small contracts.

c. Please comment on any existing abuses.

- I don't have knowledge of any existing abuses, but I plan to look for abuses as Commissioner. If competitive bidding is not used for a contract I think it should be explained in detail.

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

- No, I don't support it

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

-Yes

8. Do you support Affirmative Action?

-Yes

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

- I don't favor it.

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

- No

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

- The District is in stable financial condition despite our hard economic times. The District earned another AAA rating from all three rating agencies (July 2011): Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's, for bonds that will be issued in its upcoming bond sale. The AAA rating is the highest rating possible and signifies the credit worthiness of an agency, and is an indication to potential bond buyers that the agency has a strong capacity to honor its financial obligations. The rating agencies were impressed with the MWRD's financial stability. In the rating reports, it was noted that the triple A ratings were due to the MWRD's trend of conservative budgeting, the essential nature of the MWRD's service it provides to Cook County and stable property tax revenue for the majority of its funding. It was also noted that they were impressed with the strong financial performance with user-fee flexibility and maintenance of a high level of reserves and a moderate debt burden.

The district's dependence on property taxes contributes to financial stability. Further, the district performs extensive financial and capital planning, helping to control costs, improve operating efficiencies, and maintain appropriate reserve levels. As a result, the district ranks as one of the lowest cost providers of wastewater treatment in the nation.

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

-The sale of MWRD should be undertaken when it proves to be necessary to support the long term progress and programs of the MWRD. I would also suggest that any sale stipulate that the future use would follow eco friendly guidelines, including rainwater recapture and runoff, permeable pavements and other green technology components.

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

- MWRD's role on lakefront, riverfront and canal development should be to encourage park green space, while making certain water contamination does not occur, promote storm water management, and protect the land along the water ways.

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

- The responsibility should be to monitor developments by consulting with planners and providing options and advice on protecting our natural resources, while making sure the land along the water way is protected.

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

Yes, in areas of habitat restoration MWRD could partner with other municipalities, volunteer organizations and funders in development. MWRD could assist in its planning, promotion, and development if resources are obtained to fund the project.

I think creation of public parks and trails could foster a greater appreciation for our natural habitats, encourage more active recreational uses for our residents and expand our green space.

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

- I'm not familiar with every detail about the agreement, but as Commissioner I would immediately obtain it, and consult with my fellow Commissioners for a briefing on the pending issues.

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

-The effluent released into our waterways shouldn't have detectable amounts of phosphorous and nitrogen; an increase in those elements can disturb the natural aquatic system, eventually leading to the death of different fish due to an increase in Algae growth. The district currently meets EPA's guidelines; but additional research would be beneficial to prepare the district if the guidelines change.

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

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

c. Please explain your answers.

- We need storm water management to protect & preserve our lake and reduce flooding. It is the responsibility of the Board to saturate themselves in best practices and emerging technologies to determine the future of storm water preservation and then put those principles into action.

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

-MWRD can adjust the treatment process thru research and testing to exceed minimal requirements for permitting under

the clean water act.

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

-There should be a reevaluation of the effectiveness of TARP, there should be an increased educational focus on what citizens and municipalities must do to assist in preventing flooding.

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

MWRD should start implementing the additional disinfection of the effluent one treatment plant at a time. The process of disinfection of the effluent is already practiced by some plants operated by MWRD. The three remaining plants should now commit to providing full secondary treatment. I understand the Calumet, Northside, & Stickney plants are undergoing (or scheduled for) expansions & improvements; this would be a great time to incorporate a change of procedure to the treatment process. I would also like to advocate and research the possibility that the MWRD implement the method of Ultra-Violet light to disinfect.