

**IVI-IPO 2012 WARD COMMITTEEMAN QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 1**

DATE 12/20/2011 WARD: 1st PARTY: Democrat

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CAMPAIGN MANAGER: Juan Johnny Elias

NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED: 1326 NUMBER REQUIRED: 415

A) Elective or appointive public or party offices previously held including dates. Alderman, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward March 2010- present. Local School Council, Jose De Diego Academy, April 2008- April 2010

B) Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate. State Senator, 2<sup>nd</sup> District 2008, Delegate for presidential candidate Howard Dean, 2004

C) What is your primary occupation? Alderman, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward

D) Briefly list your civic activities of the past ten years. Wicker Park Committee (member), Founder of Wicker Park Chapter of the Campaign to End the Death Penalty (CEDP), National Board Member CEDP, CAPS Organizer, Board Member, Humboldt Park Social Services, Local School Council (above), Metropolitan Leadership Institute (MLI) Graduate (UNO Leadership Program), Board Member, Museum of Contemporary Photography

E) What subjects have you studied and what experience have you had which will be most helpful to you in the office you seek? Being Alderman and politically active in the ward for the last 15 years has given me tremendous experience in pushing for Independence in our political system

F) What candidates have you supported? Please be specific in describing your role in each campaign. City Clerk Susana Mendoza (Co- Chair), Gery Chico, Mayoral Candidate (Latino Leadership Team), Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle (fundraiser and officially endorsed her) U.S. Senator Barack Obama (community organizer), President Barack Obama (Organizer in Indiana) Presidential Candidate Howard Dean (Delegate) Manny Flores- Alderman, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward (Area Coordinator)

**G)** Please list all endorsements you have received so far. 1<sup>st</sup> Ward First- Independent Democratic Organization, Alderman George Cardenas, City Clerk Susana Mendoza, Alderman Rick Munoz, Alderman Danny Solis, Alderman Rey Colon, State Senator Iris Martinez, Alderman Scott Waguespack. I plan to have the endorsement of the entire Latino Caucus

**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 have dedicated my public life to Independent Politics. Not only was I the only Alderman to publicly challenge Mayor Emanuel when his staff tried to limit my speech (I can provide Sun Times article per request), I was also one of 27 Alderman who signed a letter protesting specifics of his budget. I am a proud sponsor of the Clean Power Ordinance, the Lead Sponsor of the Ban the Plastic Bag Ordinance, and the author of the Boycott Arizona Ordinance because of their anti immigrant legislation. My political Organization- 1<sup>st</sup> Ward First (1WF)- INDEPENDENT Political Organization has an endorsement committee to question candidates on their independent credentials and recommend endorsements.

My goals are to take the two main responsibilities of a Committeeman into the public view. The first- slating candidates when there are vacancies, has for too long been a “back room” process. Although I favor special elections when these vacancies occur, for the time being I would propose the following: When a vacancy occurs, hold a number of public meetings with the candidates attending and speaking on their credentials. Have the community vote and use that vote to officially vote as Committeeman for that candidate. The second main responsibility of a Committeeman is to slate candidates for the Democratic Party. I would implement the same objective as stated above.

**I)** What is your campaign budget? How much have you raised to date? \$150,000.00 Have raised over \$100,000

**J)** How many people are on your campaign staff? How many volunteers are on your list? **Over 200 ACTUAL volunteers. 15 on my official campaign staff**

## **IVI-IPO 2012 WARD COMMITTEEMAN QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 2**

1. Should the present signature requirement for a Committeeman's nominating petition be changed?  
If so, how? No, the present minimum and maximum requirements require potential candidates to get an extremely reasonable amount of support to demonstrate their seriousness towards the position.
2. Should there be a law (like that for replacing an alderman, etc.) for replacing a ward or township Committeeman who leaves office during her/his term? See above comments
3. What are your views on slating, the selection of candidates by the party or party committees prior to a primary or non-partisan elections? If you are opposed to slating, will you participate in slating sessions?  
See above comments
4. Should the party finance the campaigns of selected candidates in contested primary elections or non-partisan elections (such as aldermanic elections)? No

5. Does a committeeman have a responsibility to support the party's candidates after they have been selected in a primary election? Under most circumstances, yes.
6. Do you feel it is appropriate for elected officials to hold a party office? Please explain your position.  
  
Of course. To feel otherwise is, frankly, being naive. As Alderman, If I can not trust my Committeeman who has had zero (0) public meetings on the process detailed earlier in the questionnaire, and does whatever the Democratic Party Chairman tells him to do, it is my duty to run for this non paying position.
7. Have you or would you send letters to government officials soliciting jobs or promotions for individuals?  
  
I know it is the “right” thing to say No, but I feel otherwise. My community is hurting and there are many QUALIFIED people who need employment. Come to any of my ward nights and see the dozens of people (mainly low income) who are desperate for jobs. They WANT to work. It is my DUTY, as Alderman and Committeeman to LEGALLY help ANY QUALIFIED individual gain employment. Whether that is in the Private, Public, or Government arenas.
8. Have you formed or would you form a ward-wide organization? Discuss structure, meetings, membership, staff and budget. SEE ABOVE
9. How do you propose to finance your ward operations? See above
10. What plans do you have to enhance voter registration and voter turn out in your ward? In my Aldermanic election, we registered over 500 new voters. At my satellite office that I have almost every weekend, we have a voter registration drive. It is easy to answer this question and say what you WANT to do. I have demonstrated what I have DONE and will continue to do.
11. Does your organization have/or will have members? If so how does one become a member? 15 Board members, over 100 at large members. A potential member needs to be recommended by at least two board members and have already participated in community projects (e.g. Clean and Greens, school fundraisers, Block Parties, etc.)
12. Should members of a ward organization have a role in determining endorsements? Yes! See above

13. Does or will your ward organization communicate openly with residents and activists? Will you have a website to convey current information and volunteer opportunities? Already do and we hold a “mixer” each and every month--- 1<sup>st</sup> Ward Thursdays with the 1<sup>st</sup> Ward
14. What idea do you have to finding and retaining high quality election judges? My organization will REQUIRE each and every election judge to fill out an application and they will be voted on by the board of directors of 1WF.
15. What strategies will you employ to engage the residents in you ward and increase voter participation with emphasis on how you will attract younger voters? I have the best record in the city in voter participation among young voters. My satellite office is one that details the reasons people need to be politically active.
16. What should be done to include voters in the decision making process for replacing candidates on the ballot and filling vacancies of elected officials? See above!
17. Question for Incumbent: What have you done to involve more people in the political process? What further steps will you take?
18. Will you follow the Cook County judicial retention “vote Yes” campaign? Not necessarily
19. **For Republicans:** What actions will you take to make the GOP more competitive in Cook County races?