

# IVI-IPO 2007 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Date: January 2, 2007 Ward: 02  
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Number of Petition Signatures Filed: Over 8,500 Number Required: 133

Elective or appointive public and/or party offices previously held including date.  
Appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to the Character & Fitness Review Board

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

Principal business, educational, professional and civic activities of the past ten years.  
I have a background that has been dedicated to public service. I serve on numerous boards and committees such as: Illinois Secretary of State Business Advisory Committee; Chicago Bar Association Executive Committee of the Judicial Evaluation Committee; member of the American Bar Association; Chicago Volunteer Legal Services where I served as Vice President of Development; appointed by the Illinois Supreme Court to serve on the court's Character and Fitness Committee. I have served as Past President and volunteer of the Historic Pullman Foundation; former Vice President and member of the Chicago Athletic Association; member of the Justinian Society of Lawyers; and Board Member of the Italian-American Political Coalition (IAPC). I have served on the St. Mary of the Nazareth Hospital Board. I served as President of the NIU Law School Alumni Board and President of the NIU Alumni Association where I worked to increase the number of scholarships to 500 that were awarded to minority students living in the Chicagoland area.

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

My legal and undergraduate education has contributed substantially to the success of my career thus far. As a civil rights attorney, I have dedicated my life to helping those who did not have a voice. I have handled a number of cases that I have learned a great deal from. I have served as Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago. In my private practice I have worked with a number of Alderman, City and State agencies to address quality of life issues for residents throughout the Chicagoland area.

Activities of other candidates. Please be specific.

The current Alderman has opened a new office and has yet to actively engage in this campaign. She has hired former City staffers and the Haymarket group to assist with her re-election efforts.

Please list all endorsements you have received thus far.

Thus far, we have received the endorsement of the Italian American FOP. We have submitted numerous questionnaires and are awaiting responses and interviews.

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 feel that my candidacy should be endorsed because I hold the experience and passion for the job. As a civil rights attorney, I have worked hard to help those who did not have a voice. I have extensive experience in working with other city and state government agencies as well as bridging the gap with local community groups. I have been active in a number of organizations and have the energy and enthusiasm to lead. I have taken a stance of not accepting campaign contributions from developers, a position that no other candidate or incumbent has taken. This stance is one that I am committed to since the incumbent has taken over \$290,000 from developers and disregards the community and their input. As Alderman, I will introduce an ordinance that bans such Pay to Play politics in the City Council.

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

Our campaign budget is \$300,000. To date we have raised 200,000.

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

We have 4 staffers and 300 volunteers to date.

### PRIORITIES

1. a. What employment, other than alderman, if any, do you intend to hold?

None, being an Alderman is a full-time job.

b. How will you divide your time between your aldermanic duties and your other occupation?

N/A, see questions 1

c. Please specify the minimum hours per week you will spend performing your aldermanic duties.

As alderman, I will work hard to ensure that residents are informed about what is happening in their community. I will be accessible and work to ensure all residents have a say in how their neighborhoods are developed.

2. a. 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.

I will provide the appropriate level of staffing to offer the constituents of the ward the greatest level of service and access to my office.

b. What services need improvement in your ward? How will you achieve this?

All the services are poorly provided. Specifically, we need to hold developers accountable on how building are constructed. We need to ensure that residents throughout the ward are provided with adequate city services. I will work with the constituents and the appropriate city resources in order to provide the greatest level of services possible.

3. What are your top priorities for the Ward?

Decreasing crime, improving education, and holding the line on taxes

4. How will you solicit and follow citizens' and community groups' recommendations on City matters?

I will implement citizens advisory panels, monthly newsletters, interactive internet forums, and in general, open communication with the citizens of the ward.

### PLANNING, ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT

5. a. How should business and commercial development be balanced with residential development in the ward?

I will form citizens advisory councils to ensure that residents have a say in how their neighborhood is developed. I will also work with local community groups and organizations.

b. How should downtown development be balanced with community development throughout the city?

Community development should always be balanced equally with downtown development.

6. a. In what ways will you assist in the positive development of neighborhood business areas?

Businesses such as grocery stores should be given incentives to open in areas that are lacking in those services.

b. How will you involve ward residents in planning?

Citizen advisory panels will play a roll in all development projects, and their needs will always be taken into consideration.

c. What is your long-range plan for the development of the ward?

Smart long-term growth will provide for adequate services to accompany the growing population. I will ensure that adequate parking, retail and open space is part of all planning.

7. How do you intend to handle requests for zoning variances in your ward?

By holding community forums and asking for the residents input in order to keep the unique character of the individual neighborhoods intact.

8. a. What steps should be taken to achieve greater accountability and transparency in determining how TIF funds should be spent? .

I support the Mayor's emphasis on TIF's as an economic development tool. However, transparency should exist so that voters fully understand the benefits that a TIF provides as it relates to improving the quality of life for residents. TIF's can be a powerful economic engine if used correctly to stimulate development and generate tax dollars that can be used for neighborhood improvements.

b. How will you involve residents in planning and approval of future TIF districts?

Without additional disclosure, taxpayers cannot be assured that the benefits justify the costs.

c. Do you support terminating a TIF when the objectives of the TIF plan have been accomplished before the 23 year period is over?

No.

d. Do you support extending the South Loop TIF? Why or why not?

We need to ensure that TIF's are allocated correctly and used as an appropriate development tool.

9. How do you propose to replace property tax revenue for CPS and other taxing bodies that is lost to TIF development?

I will partner with local businesses to replace those funds.

10. a. Did you support or would you have supported the Big Box/Living Wage Ordinance?

Yes.

b. Why or why not?

I support a living wage. I believe there is an injustice in corporate America when CEOs are making millions in salary and bonuses while their employees go without health care coverage and struggle to make ends meet.

c. What changes, if any, would you support if the Ordinance were introduced again?

I would ensure that a living wave is achieved.

d. Would you support any kind of municipal living wage ordinance?

Only one that provided a living wage.

## HOUSING

11. Please comment on the housing problems in your ward.

Yes, we face an affordable housing crisis. We should continue to focus on public-private partnerships to create housing options across a range of incomes. I firmly believe we should extend the 7% property tax cap for a period of time for current homeowners. Regarding quality rental housing, given the cost of new construction, our focus should be on preservation and rehabilitation of existing housing stock. At this time I don't believe in mandating developer set-asides across the board, but if a developer is receiving a benefit from the city, either funding or zoning variances, then they should be a partner in helping us with our mission of providing quality, affordable housing for all residents.

12. How will you increase low-income rental housing and home ownership opportunities that would be affordable to those at 15%-30% of AMI?

Housing costs must be kept down.

13. a. Do you support one-for-one replacement of each unit of demolished subsidized housing, even though Federal law no longer requires it?

Yes.

b. What should be done to provide housing for those families displaced from public housing and not eligible for relocation under the CHA transformation plan?

Families should not be left homeless. More funding must be allocated to ensure that no families are left without a home.

c. How should the transformation plan be amended to adequately provide for the needs of low income people with disabilities?

Low income families and people with disabilities must be provided with the tools they need to become empowered and able to move forward.

d. What should be done to ensure that there is an adequate supply of affordable family sized units available to families in the Section 8 program?

The city should be transparent and accountable regarding the Section 8 program.

e. What should be done to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals and families who are not served by any existing programs?

Programs need to be created to address the needs of our entire community.

14. Do you support halfway houses and shelters for the homeless in your ward?

Yes

15. a. Do you think Chicago's Tenants' Rights Ordinance is being adequately implemented?

No.

b. What changes, if any, should be made?

Landlords should be held accountable for the conditions of their rental units.

16. a. Do you support an inclusionary zoning ordinance which would require developers to set aside 15% of residential new construction or renovation for the creation of affordable housing?

Yes.

## EDUCATION

17. a. How will you work to ease overcrowding and improve the quality of public schools and after school recreational activities?

Partnerships between local businesses, universities, and public schools will create additional sources of funding and resources for after school activities. With financial help, schools can set up their own after school tutoring centers, create more after school programming, and take after school field trips to local museums and attractions. Existing after school mentoring programs can be expanded to include more involvement from colleges and universities.

Over-crowding can be eased by recruiting local businesses to assist in re-building and re-opening schools that have been closed.

b. How will you work to improve maintenance and rehab of aging schools?

The solution to improving maintenance of aging schools is not to close them down. Money from local businesses will prove public schools with the ability to create a safe and friendly environment for the children of Chicago.

18. Do you support a city-wide lottery for enrollment in magnet schools?

Yes.

19. a. 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.

Renaissance 2010 allows our city to avoid taking responsibility for our schools and the future of our children. The answer to creating good schools good public schools is not to close "failing" schools. If a school is failing, it needs more resources. Closing a school, sending the children elsewhere, and starting a charter school only serves to push the children in the existing schools farther to the fringes of our communities.

Funding pumped into charter schools should be given to the existing schools, allowing them to create programs that will assist them in achieving academic success.

b. At what level of government should decisions be made regarding allocation of Chapter One funds?

City Council

c. How would you change the selection and approval process for the mayor's appointments to the Board of Education?

The selection and approval of the mayor's appointment should be more transparent and should not be designed for the mayor to hand-pick his choice.

20. What should the City do to improve the quality of all local schools?

Local schools can provide children with a better education if there is more funding provided to the schools. Providing incentives to local businesses can encourage them to engage in "adopt a school" programs, where they will take the steps needed to make the school function.

21. What are your plans to improve the local schools in your ward?

I plan to provide teachers and schools with tools to create the best environment for the children possible. Providing partnerships between businesses and individual schools provides supplementary resources to be used in the classroom.

#### ENVIRONMENT

22. As Blue Bag recycling is phased out and replaced with point separation, what steps should be taken to  
a. ensure participation of small businesses and non-profits in the recycling program?

Recycling has to be made as accessible as possible to small businesses and non-profits. A city funded and mandated recycling program would be the best way to engage our entire community in recycling efforts. The program should involve bins allowing the citizen/business to pre-sort their own recycling, and should include city pick up of those bins.

b. identify adequate markets for recycled materials?

They city should re-examine the market for recycled materials, focusing on cities that have expanded their recycling programs in recent years.

23. What should the City do to encourage and implement alternative forms of energy?

The city should continue to encourage projects such as the Green Roof project, and should invest in research to determine whether water or wind could provide energy to the city.

#### PARKS

24. a. Do you support increased privatization of facilities and services?

No. The city has the obligation to maintain and staff its own facilities and services for its citizens. Privatization decreases accountability.

b. Have the court decrees mandating equal park services in both programs and capital improvements been adequately achieved in your ward?

No.

c. How have cuts in the park district budget affected parks in your ward?

We do not have enough open spaces for our increasing population of families, nor has adequate space been allocated to parks to accompany the explosive growth in the Ward.

25. Do you believe Chicago's park system is adequately funded?

No.

26. Do you support siting the main/opening Olympic venue in Washington Park?

I support the Olympic Committee's recommendation for siting.

#### TRANSPORTATION

27. a. What will you do to expand CTA services to more neighborhoods?

I will increase awareness of the services available in the neighborhoods.

b. Is CTA service sufficient in your ward?

No.

c. Should the City increase its subsidy to the CTA?

Yes.

28. In what situations would you support permit parking?

I support permit parking where there is clearly a need in high density areas to benefit the residents of those neighborhoods.

#### CRIMINAL JUSTICE

29. a. Is response time adequate in 911 service?

No.

b. Are there inequities in 911 service in your ward? If so, what can be done to redress them?

Yes. There needs to be greater police presence in high crime areas.

30. a. Do you support community policing?

Yes.

b. What improvements would you suggest for this program?

Greater funding for the program with the needs of the residents as the main focus.

31. Should the City 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?

Yes.

32. Please share your views regarding the functioning of the Office of Professional Standards and whether it should operate more independently of the Police Department.

It should be more independent of the Police Department.

#### REVENUE AND BUDGET

33. Do you favor a budget ordinance which would require:

a. public questioning of city department heads concerning their departments' specific budget requests?

Yes.

b. budget copies available to the public 30 days in advance of hearings?

Yes

c. 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?

Yes

34. a. Do you support casino gambling for Chicago?

Yes

b. Would you support a citywide referendum before any gambling is instituted in the City?

Yes.

35. What level of city support do you favor for the arts and cultural events?

I support a high level of city support, combined with assistance from local businesses.

36. Do you support

a. rescinding the recent Mayoral and Aldermanic salary increases?

Yes.

b. limiting Mayoral and Aldermanic salary increases to the same percentage as the lowest raise for any class of city employees?

Yes.

37. Do you support increasing the number of staff positions for aldermanic service offices?

Yes.

#### CITY COUNCIL

38. a. What reforms are necessary in the City Council's committee structure?

Greater transparency

b. Do you favor keeping the current number of committees?

Yes.

39. a. Do you support a rule requiring the numbering of proposed City ordinances?

Yes.

b. Do you support a rule requiring all city council proceedings to be transcribed verbatim and published by the City Clerk?

Yes.

c. Do you support mandating the Clerk's office to provide copies of pending ordinances to the public upon request?

Yes.

d. Do you support a rule requiring roll call votes?

Yes.

#### CIVIL RIGHTS

40. a. Do you support affirmative action based on race, gender and sexual orientation in establishing criteria for hiring and promoting public employees?

Yes.

b. Do you support affirmative action as a criteria in letting city contracts?

Yes.

c. 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.

More women and minorities should be represented in city hiring and contracts and in higher positions.

41. Do you favor restructuring the wage scale of city employees to institute gender-equal pay for jobs of comparable worth?

All city employees deserve dignity and respect for the jobs they do. Pay should reflect that.

42. Do you support requiring all City vendors to provide spousal benefits for same-sex partners of their employees?

Yes.

#### ETHICS & CAMPAIGNING

43. Do you support patronage in hiring and promoting public employees?

No.

44. Do you support the Accountability in Privatization Ordinance?

Yes.

45. In what circumstances should the City contract for outside professional services? Please comment on any existing abuses.

When the City Council deems it necessary to reach out to fields of expertise in which there is none or limited in-house experience. The abuses stem from all "no-bid" contracts issued by a variety of governmental agencies.

46. Would you support contracting for outside services with companies located outside Chicago? Why or why not?

No. That provides no benefit to our Chicago based work force.

47. a. Will you employ or have you employed staff in your office who hold other public sector jobs concurrently?

No.

b. 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?

No.

48. Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from current or potential suppliers or employees?

No.

49. Do you support extending all of the provisions of the City Ethics Ordinance to City Council members?

Yes.

50. Do you support expanding the jurisdiction of the City Inspector General to include City Council members?

Yes.

51. Do you support public financing of municipal campaigns? Please explain your position.

52. Who are your top 5 contributors and how much has each contributed to your campaign?

Mike Conway – 20,000

John Lower – 25,000

Tony Romanucci – 10,000

Bob Fioretti – 10,000

Chuck Works – 7,000

53. Are you supporting any mayoral candidate?

No.