

IVI-IPO 2009 SUBURBAN TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS & MUNICIPAL MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS (CLERK OR TREASURER) QUESTIONNAIRE

DATE__March 5, 2009_ _____ CANDIDATE FOR__Northfield Township Supervisor_

NAME_Karen L. Nystrom___ VOTING ADDRESS__1315 Church St., Northbrook, IL 60062

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CAMPAIGN ADDRESS_1926 Waukegan Rd., #310, Glenview, IL 60025

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CAMPAIGN MANAGER_Andrew Chusid

NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED_____0 NUMBER REQUIRED__0_____

WEBSITE:__www.northfielddems.org_____

Please provide the following background information:

Elective or appointive public and/or party offices previously held including dates.

Northfield Township Trustee, 2005 to present

Democrats of Northfield Township Executive Director, 2005 to present

Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate.

Candidate for Northfield Township Trustee 2001 (lost) & 2005 (won).

Principal business, educational, professional and civic activities of the past ten years.

Legislative Aide to State Representative Elaine Nekritz (present)

Executive Director of Democrats of Northfield Township (present)

Vice President, North Suburban United Way (present)

Member, Senator Susan Garrett's Scholarship Committee (past)

Chief Professional Officer, North Suburban United Way (past)

Member, Northfield Twp. Domestic Violence Awareness Committee (present)

Member, Tenth Congressional Democrats (present)

Member, Northbrook Civic Foundation (present)

Alumni, Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership (present)

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

Serving as a trustee on the Northfield Township Board has prepared me to step up to much needed leadership on the

board. My training in the Illinois Women's Institute for Leadership gave me an excellent perspective on how to increase my public office skills and to advocate for good government. In addition, I earned a B.A. in English from Ripon College and an M.F.A. in Writing from Vermont College.

Activities for other candidates. Please be specific.

As Executive Director for Northfield Township Democrats I have organized volunteers and rallies for many candidates including Barack Obama, Dick Durbin, Lauren Beth Gash, Elaine Nekritz, Karen May, Dan Seals, Daniel Biss, Jeff Schoenberg, Susan Garrett, and others. I have worked all aspects of campaigns from walking door-to-door (perhaps most important) to driving voters to the polls to sitting on local candidates' steering committees.

Please list all endorsements you have received so far.

I have been endorsed by Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, State Senators Susan Garrett and Jeff Schoenberg and State Representatives Elaine Nekritz and Karen May.

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 should be endorsed so that I can work to bring about real ethics reform and end the practice of nepotism in the township, reduce the township reserves to levels recommended by Comptroller Dan Hynes, and reinvest in social services to assist those who struggle to get by during this recession. These are all matters I have worked towards as a Trustee, but have been stonewalled by the current Township Board leadership and majority.

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

The budget for the democratic slate of 7 candidates is \$25,000. We have raised \$15,000 so far. We have a fundraiser scheduled with Attorney General Lisa Madigan on March 23 where we are planning to raise a substantial amount of contributions to help fund our campaign.

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

The slate has one staff member and a list of over 100 volunteers.

1. What are your top priorities for this office?

My top priorities in office are to enact strong ethics reforms to end the practice of hiring elected official's family members and to control the amount of overtime being awarded to employees; require all elected officials sign ethics statements; release township reserve funds and only keep a 3-6 month reserve as recommended by the state Comptroller, instead of the current reserves which exceed one year's budget; and reinvest in funding social services. Additionally, as supervisor I will create volunteer driven commissions to address issues that affect youth, seniors, and the disabled in our township and appoint residents to serve significant roles in Township standing committees to bring real insight from the community into township policies.

2. What changes if any would you propose to the current budget, both revenue and expenses?

I will work to reduce the costs to the township by coordinating services with other units of local government to prevent duplication of services, impose limitations on overtime allowances, and work to reduce wasteful

spending within the township. Through these reductions, I believe it is possible for the township to reduce our tax levy to help homeowners during these difficult economic times.

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

We need to hire people based on their qualifications. The public deserves the best value for their dollar. We will end the practice of handing out government jobs to friends and family members who may not be the most qualified applicants.

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

The township needs to accept contracts that will perform the best quality, economical, and efficient job so that taxpayers receive the best value for their dollars.

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

Yes.

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

No.

6. a. Do you support employing municipal/township staff who hold other public sector jobs concurrently?

No.

b. Do you support employing municipal/township staff who have either outside employment or contracts with entities which do business with the municipality/township?

No.

7. In what circumstances should the municipality/township contract for outside professional services and what criteria should exist for letting contracts? Please comment on any existing abuses and how you would correct them.

Currently, we solicit Requests For Proposals (RFPs) when a project exceeds an expected cost of \$20,000. When the township requires services such as outside audits, legal counsel, and engineering, RFPs should be solicited no matter what the cost. Currently the township has no bid contracts that are given to family members and I think it's a disgrace. I believe that contracts should be prohibited from family members and political donors. I also believe that whenever possible, contracts employing residents of the township and taking environmental considerations into account should receive preference in addition to the bid price.

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

No I have not and I will not.

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

The top contributions to the slate I am running on include:

\$5,000 – The Democrats of Northfield Township

\$500 – Tenth District Democrats

\$500 – Mary Reynolds

\$500 – Dr. Kathy Barth

\$500 – Tracy McCormick

\$250 – State Senator Susan Garrett

Additionally, we have received several donations from friends and family members averaging \$75 each.