

# IVI-IPO 2009 10TH DISTRICT COUNTY COMMISSIONER QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 1

NAME: Bridget Gainer

VOTING ADDRESS: 311 W Belden

HOME PHONE: 773 244 1250 BUSINESS PHONE: 312 286 1250

EMAIL: bridgetgainer@aol.com WEBSITE:

A) Elective or appointive public or party offices previously held including dates. None

B) Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate. None

C) What is your primary occupation? I direct the Public Strategy Group at Aon

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

Boards:

Women Employed Director	2006 – present
• WE seeks to increase opportunities for women in low wage work, incl. job training, education and fair workplace policies.	
Center for Economic Progress	2006-present
• CEP provides free tax services for EITC filers, running 26 tax clinics in Chicago and statewide recouping over \$22 million for 15,500 City residents in 2008	
St. Gregory High School, Edgewater, Board Member	2005 – present
Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow	2005-2006
Parkways Foundation Director	2001 – 2007
Alternatives, Inc Board Member	1999-2000

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 have three distinct areas of experience which I believe will be helpful for me. I spent 7 years as an organizer and social worker in youth development, initially working for Geoff Canada of the Harlem Children's Zone in New York and later for Alternatives, Inc. in Edgewater and Uptown. I founded and ran a community center at Senn High School, the first time a school building was made fully open and accessible to the community nights, weekends and school holidays. In addition to the direct service, I spent a lot of that time working to make schools and other institutions – healthcare, juvenile justice, police department - work for young people and their families.

I then spent 4 years in local government in two capacities – the Budget office, where I learned how (and for what) the City budgets for, collects and disburses funds; and the Park District, running the lakefront parks. In that capacity I oversaw the park programs ( sports, daycamps, etc..) for the parks from Calumet to Loyola as well as the landscape and trades operations with a staff of 250 . I also ran the public private partnerships – harbors, parking lots, Soldier Field, concessions and oversaw capital and general operating bond issues. I am well versed in both the risks and opportunities of debt financing.

It was a good orientation as to what government does best – community programs and operations - and what outside services can better supply – specialized and seasonal operations requiring expertise and a training path outside of the public sphere. Lastly, I joined Aon where I have worked in several areas – corporate treasury, mergers and acquisitions, consulting and now public strategy. Aon has a large footprint in managing pension and employee benefits for cities, states and counties as well as developing innovative strategies to help local governments manage and keep down the cost of risk. My depth of knowledge of public pension and healthcare policy and more important, its practice across the country, will be very helpful in this office.

I also have an MBA from the University of Chicago

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

I have supported many candidates over the years as a volunteer and later adding fundraising, In chronological order– Dawn Clark Netsch for Governor (field), Dick Durbin for Senate (field), Jan Schakowsky for Congress ( field and fundraising), Lisa Madigan for State Senate (community group outreach and fundraising), John Edwards (2004) fundraising and Kerry Edwards Iowa Weekend coordination. Forrest Claypool for County Board President (field, phones and fundraising) I worked on Mayor Daley’s last campaign as the policy director and volunteered on the Obama campaign going door to door in Indiana.

**G) What goals for the office you seek are most important to you personally?**

The fiscal stability of Cook County has got to be the number 1 priority, as it allows the vital services of the County to continue. Solving the structural deficit in the Cook County budget that tops the hundreds of millions cannot be delayed any further. Secondly, that all practical alternatives – I-bonds, alternative sentencing, home confinement, are exhausted before incarceration and that the Forest Preserves fully develop their potential as an environmental resource.

**H) Please list all endorsements you have received so far.**

**IVI-IPO 2009 10TH DISTRICT COUNTY COMMISSIONER QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 2**

	YES	NO	
1.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you support removing the cap on the number of abortions performed at Stroger Hospital?
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is the distribution of County funded health facilities sufficient?
3.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your district need additional health care facilities?
	ESSAY There are never enough quality healthcare services, easily accessible. To determine deficiencies in the 10 <sup>th</sup> district and how best to address them I would look to leverage other public resources as well as private health services delivery.		
4.	ESSAY How would you solve the budget gap while still ensuring that health and other basic human services would continue to be provided?		
If you study the County budget, reports by the Civic Federation, Commissioners and the CORT reports there are myriad cost savings and efficiency opportunities that hold human services harmless – those need to be addressed before reductions to human services. In a budget that is largely personnel much of that will be in strategic use of retirements, attrition and other reductions in staffing. Improving the collection of data at intake in the healthcare system to appropriately bill private insurance or Medicaid would bring needed revenue. There are also several administrative proposals that have been around for years – combining of functions, engagement of surrounding municipalities to perform law enforcement, road and other function they could do more efficiently. They all deserve review towards implementation.			
5.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you favor a freeze in the property tax rate?
6.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you support renewing the 7% property tax cap?
7.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Should County Board approval be required prior to the creation of TIF districts in Cook County?
8.	ESSAY What should be done by the County Board to foster affordable housing, including subsidized housing?		
The most urgent task in relation to the development of affordable housing is the efficient and effective management of the NSF funds from the Federal government. This is a unique opportunity for Cook County to leverage outside resources. The County must choose a partner with the appropriate expertise, as the City has in Mercy Housing, to help them lead this effort.			

9.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will you support equitable geographic distribution of affordable housing throughout the county?
Yes			Will you support an amendment to the County Human Rights Ordinance to protect Section 8 voucher holders from discrimination in housing
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	in buildings of any size without exemptions?
11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	if owner occupied buildings of 6 or fewer units were exempted?
To balance the needs of tenants and of landlords, if the section 8 voucher is as transferable as other payments that should be acceptable, but accepting section 8 tenants should not require a landlord to engage in a complicated administrative process to receive payment.			
12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	Do you support the sale or transfer of forest preserve land to private interests?
			When I was at the Park District, we were focused on acquiring new park land and, if anything, that should be the focus of the Forest Preserve where possible.
13.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you support separating violent from non-violent offenders in County jail?
14.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you support separating juvenile from adult offenders?
15.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you favor work-release, electronic monitoring and other alternative sentencing programs?
16.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you support drug testing of potential or current County employees?
For positions in which drug use affects public safety.			
17.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you support Affirmative Action?
18.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you favor restructuring the wage scale of county employees to correct disparities based on gender by instituting equal pay for jobs of comparable worth?
19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	Do you support patronage?
20.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you favor extending the Civil Service System to replace patronage in County employment?
21.	ESSAY		What should be done to eliminate patronage abuse in county government?
To quote the current holder of this seat – As long as we elect human beings, we will sometimes be disappointed. So the first task is to elect strong, experienced managers with integrity and a commitment to best practices in hiring. Supporting that needs to be a fully transparent system that allows the parties most disadvantaged by corrupt hiring - the public, users of services and the qualified employees – to hold the elected leadership accountable, whether through the press or legal action. This is a place where the County’s Inspector General could be focused to great outcome. As a last resort, temporarily put the hiring and assessment recommendations outside of the County with a professional firm, control as many public entities do, including those who operate under Civil Service.			
22.	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	Do you favor permitting county employees to hold other public sector jobs concurrently?
23.	ESSAY		In what circumstances should the County contract for outside professional services?
The County, like other governments, should contract out for services when they are either seasonal, specialized with a training and development path outside of the public sector or when investments in specialized equipment would be required.			
24.	ESSAY		In what circumstances should competitive bidding for contracts be required? Please comment on any existing abuses.
Competitive bidding should be required for all services for which there are multiple potential bidders. It is also			

important to proactively bid for services you may need in an emergency to create a qualified bidders list from which to choose if there is a need to move quickly. This will insure not only the best firms are available, but that the process was transparent and cost effective			
25.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Would you support contracting for outside services with companies located outside of Cook County? Why or why not?
Preferably, contracts paid for with local tax dollars should go to local firms, however, quality of service, cost and ultimate value to the taxpayer would have to be primary.			
26.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Will you accept campaign contributions from current or potential suppliers, employees or outside contractors?
27.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is the County Ethics Ordinance adequate?
	ESSAY The County ethics ordinance does not go far enough and exacerbating that is the lack of enforcement. Full disclosure of all sources of income, for all categories of work (not simply the current accounting law, medicine, ..) to avoid conflicts. Additionally, make the reporting requirement for campaign contributions the responsibility of the Commissioner or elected official, not the vendor. The ordinance further should have teeth that requires the return of excess contributions. The state ethics ordinance is a good proxy. This would be an opportunity for the Inspector General to lead and make recommendations and the Commissioners should be fully engaged and supportive of a vigorous role for that office.		
28.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Do you support public financing of campaigns for this office?
29.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you support a campaign expenditure limit?
30.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will you be a full-time Commissioner?
Likely not, as I look at some of the Commissioners that I admire, Mike Quigley, Forrest Claypool, Larry Suffredin, all have additional employment. The operative factors to which I will fully commit to are providing ample time and avoiding conflict of interest.			
31.	ESSAY		What other employment, if any, do you intend to hold?
I am reviewing this with my family			
32.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will you open an office in your district?
33.	ESSAY		What will you do to ensure community involvement in identifying the concerns of the residents of your district?
As we have learned from the Obama campaign, in a district this large and diverse, with functions as varied as are under the purview of the County Board, the pro-active use of technology, specifically social networking is vital. And it is beyond just pushing information out and more about making it easy for people to communicate and inform the judgments and decisions made by a Commissioner. This allows citizens to know even what to ask for from County government. This would, of course, be in addition to outreach via organizations that addressed the issues under County jurisdiction ( health, juvenile justice and public safety, Forest Preserves/open space initiatives, taxes and budgeting) or via the ward, township and other civic organizations in which people gather to effect public policy and take action.			
34.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Should candidates for Board President be prohibited from running concurrently from a district?
35.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will you support a redistricting process that prohibits consideration of incumbency or political affiliation?