

**IVI-IPO 2006 TOWNSHIP COMMITTEEMAN QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 1**

DATE 1/14/06 TOWNSHIP: Elk Grove PARTY: Democrat

NAME: R. Kent Kirkwood

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EMAIL: rkkirkwood@comcast.net WEBSITE: Under construction

CAMPAIGN MANAGER: Not yet appointed

NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED: 285 NUMBER REQUIRED: 237

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

- Precinct Captain, 1968 to present
- Precinct Coordinator, Mt. Prospect 1970 - 74
- President, Regular Democratic Organization of Elk Grove Township, 1973-1974

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

- None

C) What is your primary occupation?

- Retired from insurance and investment sales

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

- Archdiocesan Forum on Racism and Ethnic Diversity
- Mt. Prospect Forum on Racism and Ethnic Diversity

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

- BS Degree in Political Science, University of Wisconsin – Madison
- Undergraduate and graduate study of economics

- Four years intercollegiate debate
- Action Course in Practical Politics (US Chamber of Commerce)

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

- Wisconsin Citizens for Symington, liaison with Washington Headquarters
- Hubert Humphrey, precinct captain
- Adlai Stevenson, III, original coordinator for Northwest Suburbs, liaison to township party
- Patton L. Feichter for Elk Grove Democratic Committeeman, precinct work
- John Williams for Elk Grove Democratic Committeeman, precinct work
- Howard Dean, Dean for America (DFA) member, grassroots organizing
- Christine Cegelis for Congress, Sixth Congressional District of Illinois, co-founded The Democracy Club of Elk Grove Township (DemClubEGT) to recruit and train precinct workers in the township. Got speakers for monthly meetings to attract widest audience.

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

- The Democracy Club of Elk Grove Township
- Ho-Chunk Nation, Chicago Branch

**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?

- My opponent is a product of the Chicago machine and believes in tight control. She has never a public township organization. When asked why, she told our DFA group, “Why hold a meeting when you have nothing to talk about.”
- I have started a township organization, The Democracy Club of Elk Grove Township, which the State Party Chairman has refused to recognize and to use the word Democrat in our name. We asked the incumbent to work with us but she refused. Our mission statement reads:
  - “We’re a group of Democrats, who live in Elk Grove Township. We’re “big tent” Democrats: Liberals, Conservatives, Progressives, Moderates, and Independents. We’re working to fill the need to get citizens registered to vote and to get well-qualified Democrats nominated and elected. We are also laying the groundwork to be a permanent outlet for local, grassroots action. We’re working to turn out the maximum Democratic vote from our township.”
- My goals for the office are to get a resident captain and judges in every precinct. To offer \$10 voting membership in the local party to individuals and families to everyone who wish to join (who isn’t an active Republican).
- To have face contacts with all registered Democrats

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

- \$3,000. \$500.

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

- Only two at the moment. We'e just getting started. I had 12 people circulate nominating petitions.
- 30 paid members, 80 on DemClubEGT participant list.

## **IVI-IPO 2006 TOWNSHIP COMMITTEEMAN QUESTIONNAIRE – Section 2**

1. Currently, there is no provision in the law for replacing a ward or township Committeeman who leaves office during her/his term. Should there be such a mechanism and, if so, what mechanism should exist?

Maine Township took a vote of the precinct captain and it was ratified by the Cook County Democratic Central Committee. Maine is a mature group. We don't have enough of a group like that in Elk Grove Township. The Cook County Democratic Central Committee could, thus, put in anyone they want. I don't know if it can be done effectively in underdeveloped areas. I've been encouraged to put a successor Deputy Committeeman into our by-laws if I'm elected. If I do I'll look for someone qualified (e.g., experienced in ringing doorbells, not just hanging literature, and who has helped build the organization). I think the Central Committee should only be permitted to intervene if the Township organization has not provided for itself.

2. 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?

Thirty years ago the membership of our township organization would take a vote on whether to endorse. That vote was independent of the Central Committee. If endorsements are to be done I think they should start from the bottom up. In most instances I think the party should stay neutral.

However, if the Central Committee is to endorse then I feel I'd be obliged participate by either voting not to endorse or by voting for the person I felt was the best candidate.

3. Does a committeeman have a responsibility to support the party's candidates after they have been selected in a primary election?

No, if in his/her judgement they are bad candidates. However, I don't think he/she should ever publicly endorse the other party candidate. When Democratic Ward Committeemen endorsed a Republican for mayor against Harold Washington I felt they should have resigned their office before doing so.

4. What could improve the current operation of the central committee of your party's Cook County organization?

New blood. New thinking. Don't rely on patronage. Privatization is a means to shake down contractors. Build a party based on listening to voters. Small contributors, e-mail ala Howard Dean.

5. What is your position on the current slate of your party's County organization?

I don't personally support several of the candidates. I would let my captains work for the party candidates they choose to support.

6. Have you or would you send letters to government officials soliciting jobs or promotions for individuals?

If someone asks for help I'd refer them to personnel. Hiring, however, should be done strictly on merit. I worked under civil service and I believe in it for all but policy-making jobs.

7. Have you formed or would you form a township organization? Discuss structure, meetings, membership, staff and budget.

If elected, The Democracy Club of Elk Grove Township will become the Democratic Party of Elk Grove Township.

8. How do you propose to finance your township operations?

Contributions from members should be the base. Beyond that businesses and unions would be asked to contribute but with no *quid pro quo*.

9. What plans do you have to enhance voter registration and voter turn out in your township?

Well trained precinct captains, block captains, judges and other volunteers in the membership. Sponsor voter registrar training. Post registration places and times on web site.