

## 2015 Windy City Times Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Olga Bautista, Non-Incumbent

Office Sought: 10<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman

- 1) YES, I would install a written policy regarding sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination.
- 2) YES, I have provided trainings on LGBT issues in the past and would do so for my aldermanic staff.
- 3) YES, as alderman I would address the ongoing HIV/AIDS crisis by implementing broad community education at every level, particularly aimed at young people. The Tenth Ward (far Southeast side/South Chicago) is a very poor, de-industrialized community in which there are virtually no programs in place to provide targeted treatment of or education regarding HIV/AIDS. The immune systems of many 10<sup>th</sup> Ward residents have already been compromised by years of exposure to all manner of toxins from steel and chemical plants which have been linked to reproductive, genetic and other disorders. This is a particularly at-risk community for this reason, as well as the general neglect of the mostly black and brown low-income residents with respect to public health generally.
- 4) My position on abortion and the law is that I fully support *Roe v. Wade* and its progeny and as an active feminist, young mother and community activist, I absolutely uphold a woman's right to choose. While I am sensitive to the beliefs of many here in the Ward on the "other side" I nevertheless have been able to be part of the freedom of choice movement and have been able to calmly and successfully explain and defend my position to those who disagree.
- 5) I favor greatly enlarged and fully-funded programs for HIV/AIDS. These funds should be obtained by re-directing the millions of dollars that the City of Chicago has provided under tax increment financing (TIF) to billionaire developers such as McCaffrey and U.S. Steel Real Estate whose 30-year Lakeside project will almost certainly destroy the surrounding communities. The priority should be human health, not private wealth.
- 6) YES, I favor marriage equality between same-sex couples.
- 7) Yes, I favor hate crimes legislation increasing penalties for crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

- 8) Yes, I believe LGBT's should become foster parents if otherwise qualified. It's a disgrace that hateful obstacles are placed in the way of giving a child a home and family.
- 9) YES, LGBT's should have the right to adopt, if otherwise qualified, including single LGBT's.
- 10) YES, I would maintain City committees on all LBGT issues.
- 11) I think that such schools should be available. While we must educate and fight for inclusiveness in all of society, including the schools, there must be a safe space for all children to learn. It will take society a while to rid itself of these terrible prejudices and the bullying that goes with it; in the meantime, LBGT children's right to an education should not be sacrificed.
- 12) YES, mandatory anti-bullying programs are essential.
- 13) YES, LGBT's contributions to history—and not just in the arena of LGBT rights, but in all of historical progress—should be a mandatory subject.
- 14) YES to mandatory sex education in the schools at the middle school level.
- 15) Racism and homophobia are so entrenched as cultures within the CPD that it is necessary to completely revamp the entire department. I am not a strong believer in the efficacy of “sensitivity” and other types of training. The problem is systemic; the police as an institution needs to change. Public safety functions need to be increasingly transferred to community based civilian apparatuses.
- 16) The minimum wage ideally should be at least \$20 per hour. All studies show that anything below that does not satisfy the requirement for a “living wage.”
- 17) Crime cannot be “solved” by adding more police; the police themselves will tell you that. Crime proliferates where there are no jobs, alternatives to gangs and education and programs to foster self-esteem and sense of community. The City has the resources for addressing these underlying causes and every dollar that goes to the police is a dollar not going to the roots of the problem.
- 18) Priorities
  - a. Jobs—we need a massive public works, job training and socially useful employment opportunities in the 10<sup>th</sup> Ward. The city of Chicago should stop handing millions of dollars to big developers whose promises of jobs are illusory and unsupported by the history of these publicly subsidized sources of private wealth.
  - b. Environmental degradation and risks to health—the 10<sup>th</sup> Ward already suffers from legacy toxins from the steel mills and other now-shuttered

industry. We live in a cancer cluster and our children and seniors are subjected to petcoke, coal dust, poisonous runoff and air pollution from still-remaining dirty industries.

- c. Housing- hundreds of homes have been foreclosed, particularly in the area immediately surrounding the old U.S. Steel site, and much of the remaining housing stock is dangerously in need of upgrading. The City of Chicago itself owns almost 100 lots in the 10<sup>th</sup> Ward which should be provided to the community to expand affordable housing and not sitting idle for Lakeside Development to take over.

- 19) There is no excuse for homelessness, period. Not when a home can be built on an assembly line for essentially peanuts. Not when the City of Chicago is sitting on 5,000 vacant lots and countless boarded up, foreclosed homes. No excuse. I would declare a human health emergency, re-direct TIF funds and seek federal assistance to eliminate homelessness. This was Dr. King's program, towards the end of his life: the immediate abolition of poverty. Forty years and a technological revolution later, there is even less than no excuse.
- 20) I would support elimination of all barriers to the modification of birth certificates in this arena.
- 21) I do not make inquiries of the sexual orientation of my volunteers; having said that, I am proud to have a significant percentage of openly gay supporters in high profile roles in my campaign.
- 22) I have counseled and provided trainings to diverse communities in South Chicago and other parts of the city on LGBT issues and tolerance issues in general. In my work in the immigrant community, I have dealt hands-on with refugees who fear returning to their countries of origin for fear of harm based on their sexual orientation. I have seen this kind of discrimination in my own community and as a member of the Local School Council, and other groups, have never shied from calling such discrimination out.
- 23) The biggest issue facing the LGBT community today is the worsening climate of violence and hate that permeates the culture and many American institutions. In part, this hate from many quarters is a result of the huge strides made in the legal arena re marriage equality and gay rights.