

WINDY CITY TIMES CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Aldermanic races

Return responses by fax (773-871-7609), regular mail (Windy City Times, c/o Andrew Davis, 5315 N. Clark, #192, Chicago, Ill., 60640) or e-mail (Andrew@windycitymediagroup.com). Call 773-871-7610, ext. 201, if questions arise.

DEADLINE: Friday, Jan. 9, 2015, by 5 p.m. LATE RESPONSES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

Please feel free to use additional paper as needed.

YOUR NAME: Annisa Wanat INCUMBENT? YES/NO NO
OFFICE SOUGHT: 33 Ward WARD (if appropriate): 33
Alderman

1) Do you have or would you install a written policy in your office regarding sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination? YES

2) Have you started or would you start sensitivity training for your staff members regarding LGBT-related issues? YES

3) Have you taken or would you take any steps to further HIV/AIDS treatment and education programs? If so, what are those measures? _____

4) What is your position on abortion as it pertains to the law?
Pro-choice, adamantly.

5) What is your position regarding funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and education?

6) Do you favor marriage equality (marriage between two people of the same gender)? YES

7) Do you favor hate-crimes legislation that increases penalties for crimes committed based on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the person attacked? YES

8) Do you believe LGBTs should become foster parents if they are qualified? YES

9) Do you believe LGBTs have the right to adopt children if they are qualified? YES

10) Would you keep committees such as the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on LGBT Issues? YES

11) What are your thoughts on a school that would be designed specifically for LGBT students, much like the Harvey Milk School in New York City?

Please see supplemental

12) Would you advocate for mandatory anti-bullying policies/training in Chicago public schools?
YES I would.

13) Would you advocate for mandatory LGBT-inclusive history education in Chicago public schools starting in middle school? See supplemental

14) Would you advocate for mandatory comprehensive, LGBT-inclusive and age-appropriate sex education in Chicago public schools starting in middle school? _____

15) What would you recommend to have a better relationship between police and the citizens they serve, including people of color and the transgender community?

Please, see Supplemental

16) If you are an incumbent, did you vote for the recent increase in the city's minimum wage and, if a challenger, would you have? Also, what do you think is the ideal minimum wage for the city of Chicago?

See supplemental

17) How do you propose to handle the crime rate in Chicago, especially in minority neighborhoods?

See supplemental

18) What do you feel is the biggest problem facing your ward? How do you propose to tackle that problem?

See supplemental

19) Some studies show that 40 percent of homeless youth are LGBTQ. What would you do to provide more resources for prevention, education and services for the entire homeless youth population?

See supplemental

20) New York City eliminated barriers to transgender people changing their birth certificates. They just need a letter from a doctor to do so. Would you support this for Chicago? Yes

21) Are any members of your current staff—either campaign or general office personnel—openly LGBT? I have several LGBT volunteers.

22) Please list any and all experience you have on LGBT-related issues.

See supplemental

23) What do you feel is the biggest problem facing the LGBT community today?

See supplemental

Annisa Wanat - 33rd Ward - Supplemental

3. Have you taken or would you take any steps to further HIV/AIDS treatment and education programs? If so what measures?

I have several HIV positive friends/colleagues and I think that dispelling the myths that continue to persist is key for any education program. As alderman, I would use my position to help promote the conversation on these issues – and not only on December 1st.

5. What is your position regarding funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and education?

I believe that funding for education is vital and treatment for treatment is also important. I would need to see cost information on any new program, and identify about potential revenue sources to be able to answer this question completely.

11. What are your thoughts on a school that would be designed specifically for LGBT students, much like the Harvey Milk in New York City?

I support pilot programs such as the mentoring program in Lincoln Park High School as a pilot and would like to see how these programs work and then discuss expansion.

13. Would you advocate for mandatory LGBT inclusive history education in CPS starting in middle school?

As a certified teacher, I am not against including more history of any kind and as alderman, I look forward to hearing from parents, educators and the LGBT community on this issue to make an educated decision.

14. Would you advocate for mandatory comprehensive, LGBT-inclusive and age appropriate sex education in CPS starting middle school?

I need more information and would like to talk to parents, educators, and the LGBT community in order to make an educated decision.

15. What would you recommend to have a better relationship between police and people they serve, including people of color and transgender community?

CAPS meetings are a great place for residents to discuss their concerns about public safety with their local police officers. Unfortunately, these meetings are not always conveniently timed/located to maximize attendance. As alderman, I will work with the district commanders and their teams to foster more interactions between the CPD and the community. Possibilities include holding regular positive loitering events and facilitating police participation in other community meetings, such as at

parent nights at local schools, at neighborhood groups meetings, or at other community social events.

16. If you are an incumbent, did you vote for the recent increase in the city's minimum wage and, if a challenger, would you have? Also, what do you think is the ideal minimum wage for the city of Chicago?

The recent vote to increase the minimum wage is a first good step to addressing poverty issues in our city. The ideal minimum wage is not based on only a specific number rather on its impacts in our communities. We need additional public education on how this minimum wage increase will be rolled out and impact small businesses in the city needs to be undertaken because local business owners are concerned about the impact it will have on their bottom line. Furthermore, as community leaders, the aldermen need to step up their efforts to lobby for an increase in the minimum wage at the state and federal levels.

17. How do you propose to handle the crime rate in Chicago, especially in minority neighborhoods?

There are many important approaches that can taken to address this problem, such as:

(1) Strengthening neighborhood schools - Sending students to schools outside of our communities threatens public safety; when neighborhoods send their children away to school, parents are less likely to know their children's friends and parents. Strengthening neighborhood schools means that fewer students will travel for school and more neighborhood children will study and play together. Strong neighborhood schools increase interaction among neighbors and, as a result, can reduce the influence of gangs in a community.

(2) Promote neighborhood schools as community centers - Encourage their use as community centers by offering more after-school and adult programs.

(3) Better mental health services in our schools.

(4) Promote restorative justice programs in our schools.

18. What do you feel is the biggest problem facing your ward? How do you propose to tackle that problem ?

The biggest concerns I hear from ward residents revolve around irresponsible budget decisions that are made on the taxpayers' behalf, which has resulted in higher taxes/fees for individuals and decreased services in our ward - whether for schools, infrastructure, or public safety. In addition, there is a deep frustration with the role that nepotism played in the appointment of our alderman in 2013. As a result of these issues, public trust in elected officials is on the decline.

To increase public trust, we need more aldermen who recognize that we make better decisions when we make them together. As alderman, I will hold public discussions on the important issues that face our city, such as the annual budget, TIF

reform, strengthening neighborhood schools, and addressing our pension obligations. It is also important to have public discussions on ward-level issues. As alderman, I will lead residents in public discussions to develop a revitalization plan to promote development - without pricing hard-working families out of our diverse ward. We need to work as a community to make decisions on zoning, economic development, and developing opportunities for recreation in the ward. By providing more opportunities for citizens to have input into the process, we will generate more ideas on how to address important policy issues and increase public trust in our elected officials.

19. What would you do to provide more resources for prevention, education, and services for the entire homeless youth population?

As alderman, I would support the efforts of nonprofits running these programs as they attempt to get the state to pay their grant disbursements on time. I would also use my position to help promote programming – such as the 750 Club Apartment Adoption Project and the Chicago Youth Storage Initiative – and not only on December 1st.

22. Please list any and all experience you have on LGBT-related issues

- Collaborated with LGBT communities/organizations when I was an organizer around poverty and health care issues, HIV/AIDS education in particular.
- Supported an openly LGBT candidate in 40th district primary

23. What do you feel is the biggest problem facing LGBT community today?

I think the biggest problem facing the LGBT community today is LGBT homelessness – with 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBT. I believe these communities need to be better served. By providing education, health care, housing and other programs we can create a bigger sense of community regardless of age. With such programs we can support youth transition better to adulthood and avoid chronic adult homelessness.