

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). Feel free to 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: _____ William D. Burns “Will Burns” __ INCUMBENT? YES
OFFICE SOUGHT: _____ Alderman ____ WARD (if appropriate): _____ 4th _____

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

The City of Chicago does through the Department of Human Resources.

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

The Fourth Ward is one of the most diverse wards in the City of Chicago. As a consequence staff are trained to respect all constituents regardless of race, gender, sexual identity, or class.

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

I support public investment in HIV/AIDS education programs. These investments are included in City of Chicago budget ordinances.

4) What is your position on abortion as it pertains to the law?

I am pro-choice and believe that Roe v. Wade must be upheld.

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

Given the rates of infection in the African American community continued funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and education is absolutely critical.

6) Do you favor marriage equality (marriage between two people of the same gender)? Yes. I voted for civil unions as a state representative and at the request of my colleague, then State Rep. Deb Mell, I spoke in favor of marriage equality.

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 that LGBT individuals should become foster parents if they are qualified? Yes

9) Do you believe that LGBT individuals have the right to adopt children if they are qualified? Yes

10) Would you keep committees around such as the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations' Advisory Council on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender 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? I support the idea of a school for LGBT and LGBT supportive students.

12) Would you advocate for mandatory anti-bullying policies/training in Chicago public schools? Yes. As I a state representative, I voted for legislation that called on school districts to create anti-bullying policies.

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

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

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?

It is vitally important that police officers understand the communities and residents they police. Strong and open lines of communication between residents and police are critical to reducing tension and facilitating understanding. Police officers also must be respectful of the communities and residents they serve. Finally, diversity within the police ranks helps to improve policing in discrete communities.

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?

I co-chaired Mayor Rahm Emanuel's working group that recommended a \$13/hr minimum wage. We did so because the data showed that it could provide a significant boost to low income Chicagoans without creating a burden to Chicago businesses. The minimum wage ordinance is estimated to generate \$800 million in economic stimulus.

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

During my tenure crime rates in the Fourth Ward have gone down. I have worked hard with the commander of the 2nd District to develop networks to prevent crimes before they happen. I have also been an advocate for higher numbers of police officers on our street.

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

We must continue to create living wage jobs.

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?

First, we must successfully execute Plan 2.0 to end homelessness which has a focus on youth homelessness. Second, elected officials must continue to raise awareness of the problem of youth homelessness to increase private sector investment in these vital programs. Third, the City of Chicago must advocate for additional federal and state resources to address the crisis.

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? No

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

Please see above.

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

We need to pass federal legislation to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation.