

Windy City Times Candidate Questionnaire

Keiana Barrett

Incumbent: No

7th Ward Aldermanic Candidate

- 1) Yes, I will have a written policy.
- 2) Yes, I would offer sensitivity training for my staff and volunteers.
- 3) Yes, I have participated in World's AIDS programs, along with organizing community events to promote testing - 'Know Your Status'.
- 4) What's your position on abortion as it pertains to the law.

I support a woman's right to choice. It is imperative for us to uphold the law and protect the rights of women.

- 5) What is your position regarding funding for HIV/AIDS treatment and education
 - a. A huge portion of those individuals with HIV/AIDS do not even know they have the virus. Moreover, antiretroviral treatments are incredibly expensive. Every individual infected with HIV/AIDS should have access to affordable and high quality treatment regimens. We should invest in resources that educate the most vulnerable populations on risk factors and preventative actions. We should also raise awareness amongst the general population that HIV/AIDS is not a death sentence, and infected individuals can live long, productive lives. Moreover, we must educate the general population about how HIV/AIDS is transmitted as well as how it is not transmitted (since such misinformation can serve as a basis of discrimination against individuals affected by HIV/AIDS).
- 6) Do you favor marriage equality (marriage between two people of the same gender)
 - a. Yes.
- 7) Do you favor hate-crimes legislation that increases penalties for crime committed based on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the person attacked.
 - a. Yes
- 8) Do you believe LGBTs should become foster parents if they are qualified.
 - a. Yes
- 9) Do you believe LGBTs have the right to adopt children if they are qualified.
 - a. Yes
- 10) Would you keep committees such as the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations Advisory Council on LGBT issues

a. 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.

a. I personally dream of a day in which all schools in the City of Chicago are safe, equitable, and diverse. While I recognize the fact that a school specifically designed for LGBT students would serve to limit the rampant bullying LGBT students must contend with on a daily basis in the school setting, I also wonder what the unintended consequences of such a decision might be. Schools are often a critical socializing force for children, and they often serve as a microcosm for the broader society. Therefore, if we can aspire to provide a school climate that is empowering, equitable, and provides a safe environment for all LGBT students, we should make every effort to do so.

12) Would you advocate for mandatory anti-bullying policies/training in Chicago Public Schools.

a. Yes.

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

a. Yes.

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

a. 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.

a. Yes

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

a. I believe in the unending power of communities working together to tackle crime, particularly in those neighborhoods most affected by it. To truly drive down the crime rate in Chicago, we must abandon "silver bullet" approaches, and recognize that a multi-dimensional effort must be undertaken, from the grassroots. We must strengthen community ties, block-by-block. We must strengthen core institutions such as schools. We must also recalibrate the relationship between law enforcement and Chicago's citizens in such a way that there is a continuity of mission, and one that is enforced fairly. We must deal with offences in such a way as to truly heal communities (including using Restorative Justice practices). We must provide past offenders with pathways out of crime, including expungement options and workforce development. Above all, we must invest in prevention, beginning with our education system.

- 17) What do you feel is the biggest problem facing your ward. How do you propose to tackle that problem. Public Safety is the number one issue facing my community. The presence of crime destabilizing communities and weakens economic development and discouraging middle class families from procuring homes and/or maintaining their residency in the ward. As Alderman, I would fight for an increased number of law enforcement officers, enhancing strategies and information sharing through Compstas and meaning gun legislation and stricter penalties for gun shop owners. Likewise we must have interventions and investment on the community level, to curb crime and create a slate of meaningful and cost- friendly alternative.
- 18) Some students 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.
- a. Many LGBTQ youth become homeless precisely because of their families' reactions to their LGBTQ status. In my opinion, homelessness represents an egregious multi-institutional failure. We must address these areas for improvement in the social services. Front-line service providers should be equipped with a full understanding of the variety of options for their most vulnerable students. In addition, we should consider designating specific shelters for LGBTQ youth.
- 19) 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.
- a. Yes
- 20) What do you feel is the biggest problem facing the LGBT community today.
- a. I believe that LGBT school bullying represents one of the most pressing problems facing the community today. Along a variety of metrics, victims of LGBT bullying experience worse outcomes than those who do not. Moreover, the effects of school climates that fail to address such actions are lasting and incredibly damaging. That being said, I believe that top-quality interventions that are adopted throughout the school community can result in school climates that are safe and empowering; something all students can benefit from.
- 21) Please list any and all experience you have on LGBT-related issues. Collaborating with LGBT organizations to promote equal rights and fair treatment. I have worked with local high schools on sensitivity training and methods to build healthy working relationships.

Mental Health Movement

22) In 2012, the Chicago Department of Public Health closed 6 of its 12 clinics resulting in disruption of care for clients and a reduction in services to Chicago residents, especially in low income, underserved communities. Research indicates that there is a significant unmet need for mental health services throughout the city.

Would you support an addition \$2.71 million to CDPH budget each year over four years to open (or reopen) two mental health clinics each year.

Yes

23) For many years CDPH has not conducted any educational effort to increase public awareness about the importance of seeking mental health services and about the availability of city mental health services.

Would you support efforts to require CDPH to conduct a public education campaign with an initial focus on communities near the current six clinics.

Yes

24) CDPH argued that it closed mental health clinics due to budget constraints but it has repeatedly failed to pursue revenue-generating options for the mental health centers. In fact, management problems with billing the state for services have resulted in a loss in revenue numerous times.

Would you support efforts to get CDPH to join managed care networks in order to be able to bill for services provided to new ACA Medicaid patients (including County Care)

Yes

Would you support efforts to ensure an open admissions policy at all CDPH mental health clinics to bring in much-needed revenue and expand options for those seeking services.

Yes

Would you support efforts to ensure adequate billing procedures at CDPH.

Yes