**2015 CHICAGO SUN-TIMES CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name: Rory A. Fiedler

Ward: 47th

Occupation: Designer

Education: School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Previous political and civic experience: No political, Parish Council and Habitat for Humanity

**1) City Pensions**

Chicago's fire and police pensions are greatly underfunded, and the city is required by the state to make a $550 million payment into the pension funds by the end of 2015. Do you support restructuring the pension systems, inevitably reducing benefits, to put the funds on sound financial footing?

Yes or No: No

Please Explain: After their years of public service, I feel that the police and fire departments are entitled to a fair pension, especially while the costs of living continue to escalate.

Chicago's pension systems for municipal workers and laborers already have been restructured, reducing benefits, but the city has yet to identify where it will find the revenue to sufficiently fund those systems. Under what circumstances would you support a property tax increase to raise the needed revenue for the fire and police pensions and/or the municipal workers and laborers pensions?

I feel that a tax increase should only put those the private industries that use TIF funds.

**2) Chicago Public Schools pensions**

Large and growing payments required to keep the Chicago Teachers’ Pension Fund solvent are squeezing CPS' budget, forcing cuts elsewhere and limiting investment. The Chicago Board of Education has increased property taxes, but it is not enough to keep up with the high annual costs. What measures do you support to ensure a solvent retirement system and to improve the district's finances?

No answer

**3) Revenue**  
  
In light of the financial issues discussed above, do you support any or all of the following measures, each of which would require**,** at a minimum, approval by the Illinois Legislature?

\* A statewide expansion of the sales tax base to include more consumer services

Yes or No: Yes

\* A tax on non-Chicago residents who work in the city

Yes or No: Yes

\* A tax on electronic financial transactions on Chicago’s trading exchanges, known as the “LaSalle Street tax”

Yes or No: Yes

Please explain your views, if you wish, on any of these three revenue-generating measures.

Non-residents that work in the city are allowed to perk on the city streets without a city sticker and then take public transportation to their places of employment downtown. This has caused a major parking issue in many neighborhoods, including mine.

**4) Crime**

Do you support hiring more police officers to combat crime and gun violence in Chicago?

Yes or No: Yes

Please explain: I feel that more patrol officers, be it in cars, on the transit or even “on the beat” would deter crime. Gun violence is another issue altogether.

What legislation in Springfield would you support to try to stem the flow of illegal guns into Chicago?

Waiting periods allowing a full background check and periodic re-registration of guns that exist in the city.

**5) Elected school board**

An advisory referendum on switching Chicago to an elected school board, rather than an appointed board, is expected to be on the ballot in more than 30 wards on Feb. 24. Currently, the mayor appoints all seven board membersand the Schools CEO. Do you support a change to an elected school board?

Yes or No: Yes

Please explain: I feel that we should elect the most qualified people based on their experience, knowledge and proven results.

**6) Tax-increment financing districts**

TIFs are the primary economic development tool of the city. In a TIF district, taxes from the growth in property values are set aside for 23 years to be used for public projects and private development. Do you support increasing the annual TIF surplus that the mayor and the City Council have declared in each of the last few years, money that goes to the schools and other city agencies?

Yes or No: No

What reforms would you propose for the city's TIF program?

I do not believe that TIF funds should be used for private enterprise. I do feel that these funds should be used for public community projects if at all.

**7) Neighborhood economic development**

What would you do as alderman to boost economic development in your ward, and bring jobs to your community?

Offer incentives to those that would be willing to open small businesses and hire within the ward. We have a quite a few vacant storefronts that could use help.

**8) Size of the Chicago City Council**

The City Council has 50 members, but civic groups and other regularly argue for reducing the size of the Council. What should the size of the Council be? Please provide a specific number. And why?

I feel that the current number has worked. To be truly effective for your constituents, it should be a manageable amount.

**9) A Chicago casino**

Do you support, in general concept, establishing a gambling casino in Chicago?

Yes or No: Yes

Please explain: I believe this is a way to bring more money and tourism into the city. This would be an ideal way to work with tax and pension issues.

**10) Red light and speed cameras**

Does the city have an acceptable number of red light and speed cameras currently, and are they properly employed?

Yes or No: No

Please explain: I am a proponent for doing away with the red light and speed cameras.

**11) Ward issues**

What are the top three issues in your ward — the ones you talk about most on the campaign trail?

Too many up zoned properties that are creating too much density in a ward with enough parking issues already.

Affordable housing to allow seniors and long-time residents to remain in a ward that they have built over the years.

Having a full time alderman that is available to hear and address any issues that the residents may have.