**2015 CHICAGO SUN-TIMES CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name: Ariel Reboyras

Ward: 30

Occupation: Alderman

Education:

Graduated from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a BA in Education.

Previous political and civic experience:

I have been Alderman of the 30th Ward since 2003.

**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: Yes

Please Explain:

At this moment we need to look at a full pension system reform. We need to make sure we help lower the costs to our taxpayers while protecting and maintaining the current pension that the members receive.

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?

A property tax increase has to be the last option after all else was exhausted. We have to commit to finding additional revenue to fund our pension system and not tax our residents out of their homes.

**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?

Similar to the Police and Fire Pensions, we need to look at all options to funding education. I have talked about TIF reform as a possibility to free up funds so we can ensure that our commitments are made.

**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: No

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

Yes or No: No

\* 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.

In order for me to support any tax, I need to be sure and have the proof that it will go towards our public services like education and public health.

**4) Crime**

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

Yes or No: Yes

Please explain:

Our police force is stretched too thin and we need to support them by hiring more officers who are able to manage the needs of the city.

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

We need to look at all options that have proven records. We cannot pass legislation for the sake of passing legislation. I would need research and reports that show which is the best direction to take with gun control.

**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 support a hybrid model of half elected members and half appointed.

**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: Yes

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

Reforms that I would like to see within the TIF program are to allow some funds to be used for the Chicago Public Schools and the Police and Fire Departments.

**7) Neighborhood economic development**

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

I have continued to work with our multiple Chambers of Commerce to attract new businesses to the Ward that will ultimately provide jobs for the community. I have also worked to expand TIF areas within our Ward to provide businesses with additional benefits in moving to our area. The more businesses we can attract the more opportunity for the 30th Ward residents to find employment.

**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 am not in favor of reducing City Council. The current amount of Alderman allows for greater representation of Chicago Communities and provides a personal relationship with residents in the City. I feel it is important for residents to have an ease of access to their elected officials and by having the amount we currently have residents are able to do so.

**9) A Chicago casino**

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

Yes or No: Yes

Please explain:

Having a Casino in Chicago will allow for revenue that is currently leaving our City to stay. I am also in favor and support revenue from these casinos going to our public services such as Education.

**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: Yes

Please explain:

I believe the speed cameras and red light cameras have served their purpose in making the City more aware of their driving and being more cautious around our Safety Zones.

**11) Ward issues**

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

Economic Development- we have to continue to work to attract businesses to the 30th Ward, which can provide employment opportunities to residents.

Community Safety- I will continue to work with our Police Districts to create a safe Ward that relies on community assistance and transparency

Unity- I am committing this next term to working to unite the new areas of the 30th Ward. It is vital that we become one community; it is my duty to provide the new areas with information regarding city services and educating them on how the Alderman’s office is here to serve them. We want to have the entire ward engaged in community meetings and decisions.