

2015 CHICAGO SUN-TIMES CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: Anne Shaw

Ward: 1st

Occupation: Civil Rights Attorney and Small Business Owner

Education: IIT Chicago Kent College of Law and DePaul University College of Commerce

Previous political and civic experience: Volunteer Commissioner for the Cook County Board of Ethics through 2014 and ran for Democratic Committeeman 1st Ward in 2012.

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 on reducing benefits, yes on other restructuring.**

Please Explain:

A pension is a contract, and one the City cannot break.

We need to make sure the pensions that we promised to city workers are funded for the future. The pensions themselves are not the problem; it's that the City used money that should have been saved for other purposes.

Teachers and other city employees kept their end of the bargain: they put in the hours and they paid their share. Any funding solution to pensions cannot place the entire burden on members of the pension system.

On the other hand, I think everything from new funding sources to how the funds are invested should be on the table. My preference is to look for ways to broaden the tax base, close corporate tax loopholes and giveaways, and restructure the payment schedule with guarantees that the City cannot defer payments.

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 am opposed to increasing the property tax because it is a tax that is not based on ability to pay. Moreover, the City will often provide abatements of the property tax to favored corporations. Too many longtime residents in my Ward see their taxes increase without having the ability to pay those increases.

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?

First, I would look to the \$1.7 billion TIF surplus. TIFs were based on the idea that a school district would give up revenue for a set period of time, but when the property was returned to the rolls, the school would start receiving more revenue from the revitalized property. This is not happening with TIFs currently, and so I am in favor of returning to the schools what the TIFs took away.

Second, I believe that we should broaden the tax base. We should look at property tax incentives to businesses more closely. We should also take a look at other ways to broaden the tax base so that those who currently do not pay their fair share start paying.

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: **Yes.**

* A tax on electronic financial transactions on Chicago's trading exchanges, known as the "LaSalle Street tax"

Yes or No: **No.**

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

I support broadening the tax base. As manufacturing is replaced by services as a large part of our economy, we have to look at all options for increasing revenue. However, I also believe that many services used by ordinary people should not be subject to a sales tax. I could support a service tax on luxury services only and limited business-to-business services only. But, I would want to see the actual proposal.

I support a tax on non-residents who benefit from the infrastructure and services provided by the City of Chicago when they come here for their jobs.

I would like to see a more detailed economic impact analysis prepared by independent parties before supporting the “LaSalle Street” tax.

4) Crime

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

Yes or No: **Yes**

Please explain:

One of the major reasons I am running for alderman in the 1st Ward is that Alderman Moreno supported closing down two police stations in the Ward. This has led to longer response times and an increase in crime. Recently, the alderman seems to have realized his mistake and now calls for a partial reopening of the station. However, it's too little, too late. Any alderman who supports cutting the number of police officers in his own ward does not deserve re-election. The city as a whole needs more police officers, and I support proposals to hire more police and fire personnel.

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

I support legislation that would give the Chicago Police Department more time and discretion before approving a concealed carry permit. I support limits on gun sales

to one a month, particularly to residents of one city (such as Chicago) who travel to another place to buy a gun. I support expanding the places in which concealed carry is not allowed to include all establishments that serve liquor instead of just those at which 50% or more of their sales are from liquor.

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 members and the Schools CEO. Do you support a change to an elected school board?

Yes or No: **Yes**

Please explain:

I support an elected school board. While the incumbent may now say he wants a referendum on an elected school board, he also said, "I believe that the Mayor should appoint the chief executive and board, therefore keeping accountability in one place." In contrast, I believe that the School Board should be accountable to the parents and residents of Chicago, not the Mayor.

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?

TIFs were created with the idea that school districts and other units of local government would give up property tax revenue for a set period of time during which a blighted area would be redeveloped. After the time expired, the property would be returned to the district's tax rolls at a higher value, thus increasing the revenue the district received.

That is simply not how TIFs are operating in Chicago. TIFs have substantial surpluses that are being used to subsidize private enterprise instead of paying for our schools' needs.

Every TIF in Chicago should be subject to review, and those that are not actually improving blighted areas should be abolished. The surpluses should be returned to

the schools and other districts. I oppose extending the life of a TIF beyond the statutory 23 years.

7) Neighborhood economic development

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

In addition to tech incubator programs and bringing more tech companies to the ward, I am in the planning stages of developing a manufacturing incubator program and revitalize manufacturing jobs in the First ward. We have a number of industrial corridors which need to be preserved and used for what they were intended for. The time for light and medium manufacturing is now and also the future. We need to support these businesses and manufacturers not unlike our tech incubator programs. This would be an innovative project that will have far reaching and long lasting beneficial results and also broaden the tax base significantly.

I also will work to remove much of the unnecessary barriers, delays, and red tape that small businesses are still experiencing when trying to open. As a successful small business owner for over a decade and attorney who represents and assists small businesses, I know firsthand these problems and also have solutions for helping small businesses open faster while balancing the needs of the community and the City. I am also committed to working with our existing businesses to help them grow rather than just be a source of donations.

Finally, I also have a plan for a trades and high skilled labor training program that starts in high school where we have some of the highest unemployment rates and which coincides often with high violent crime rates. This program would not just be about training, but will include partnerships with businesses to hire our trained students providing them a long term pathway to future success and again broadening our tax base.

Nowadays, we have to think outside of the box and come up with real long term solutions to these long term problems. This can all be done with hard work and perseverance.

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 believe that the important issue is that we have aldermen who are accountable to their constituents, not to some other political force. This is far more important than whether there are 50 or 25 aldermen in City Council. I am not opposed to reducing the number of aldermen, but any decision would be guided by my belief that the

result would be a City Council less accountable to other politicians and more accountable to the residents.

9) A Chicago casino

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

Yes or No: **Undecided**

Please explain:

The economics of casino gaming has changed a lot since casino gaming has exploded in the United States. I would want to see independent economic impact studies on the specific proposals. I would only support a gaming casino in Chicago if the market could support it, it produces significant revenue for the long term, and if there were safeguards to prevent the casino from being a giveaway to politically connected insiders.

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:

There is a basic mistrust of traffic light and speeding cameras by the residents of Chicago because it has never been clear that the program is about safety rather than revenue. I think we have to be clear in our budgeting and in the placement of the cameras that the program is not about revenue. Our budget should not be balanced on projected increases in traffic fines by cameras, and the decision on placing cameras cannot be based on the revenue that camera may produce.

11) Ward issues

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

Public safety is the single most important issue in this campaign. I am running in large part because the incumbent, Alderman Joe Moreno, supported the closing of the 13th and 19th district police stations. This has resulted in increased response times to emergency calls and increased crime in the 1st Ward. An alderman who

worked to reduce the number of police officers in the ward should not continue serving.

I also support our public schools and our teachers. The incumbent Alderman appeared on Fox News nationally to criticize our teachers, and has been a long time and strong supporter of charter schools. I think our teachers do a difficult job, and we should be supporting them. And while I support having some charter schools as a way of experimenting with education policy, right now 1 in 5 of our schools is a charter school. We recently closed over 50 neighborhood schools, but are expanding the number of charter and other specialized, limited enrollment schools. I believe the City needs to work on making our traditional public schools good schools, rather than closing them in favor of privatized options.

Last, I support creating an environment in the First Ward that is conducive to the creation and success of small businesses. The First Ward has a number of advantages in today's economy – a diverse population, good technical infrastructure, and areas suitable for light manufacturing. I will work to leverage these assets with good policy to create new jobs in the Ward.