

2012 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION COMMISSIONER

Instructions to Candidates: The following questionnaire will be used to evaluate candidates for the office of Democratic Election Commissioner. Please answer each question so that we can compare the answers of each candidate and so that you can give the Cambridge Democratic City Committee a full and fair picture of your qualifications and ideas for the position. Responses should be in a form suitable for reproduction, in single-spaced format. Responses must be received by Secretary Jefferson Smith by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, February 1, 2012. Mr. Smith's address is 134 Tremont Street #2; Cambridge, Mass. 02139. He may also be reached at jefferson2016@gmail.com.

1. State your name, residential address, business address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address.

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2. **Personal.** Give a brief biographical summary, including your occupation and past activity in the Democratic Party, community, Cambridge politics, and voter registration. Attach a resume or CV. Please include your experience, if any, with elections laws, proportional representation, and Cambridge election procedures. Is there, or do you anticipate, anything (time, other commitments) that would present a conflict of interest or otherwise make it difficult to fulfill your duties as Election Commissioner for the full four-year term? **Father of three accomplished young girls, and 25 year Cambridge resident. Resume attached. I have been very involved with youth regarding voter registration for over ten years. In addition, I have served as election clerk at 4-1, and 6-2 polling sites for at least five elections. I have also served as a city counselor.**

Attached is my resume.

3. **Reason for Seeking Office.** Please explain why you are seeking the office of Election Commissioner.

I am seeking the office of Election Commissioner to continue working on engaging as many people as possible in the voting process and insuring ongoing integrity.

4. **Voter Participation (registration and turnout).**

a. **Increasing participation.** Given the dynamic nature of the City of Cambridge, with a highly transient population, how do you propose to increase the number of people who register and vote across elections for different offices? **Start young! There is strong evidence suggesting if parent votes, the more likely their children will vote. We should focus on educating students by the sixth grade on the importance of voting.**

Do you have any specific suggestions for increasing participation? Encouraging schools to hold mock elections just prior to the elections and students can talk about their experiences with the goal being getting parents to get more involved.

b. **Information.** Do you have any proposals for improving the existing voter education program? **Go to the schools, and partner with businesses.** Do you support or oppose proposals requiring the posting of the MA Voters Bill of Rights in every polling place? **Yes.** Do you support or oppose proposals that would allow Cambridge voters to check their registration status online, as Boston voters may? **Support**

5. **Accuracy of Voter Lists.** Do you think that the existing system is adequate to minimize voter list inaccuracies (e.g., erroneously dropping voters, or carrying nonresidents on the voter lists)? **When people change their licenses it should automatically update our rolls.** Do you have an opinion on the current policy regarding inactive voters? **Try to get them to become active.** Do you have any improvements to propose? **I would evaluate current efforts and see what is needed.** Would you propose any changes to the yearly city census? **Not sure how that fits into the role as commissioner.**

6. **Election Commission Staff.** What is the proper balance between the commissioners and the staff? **The staff is managed by the director, as should be. Commissioners should deal only with policy, not day to day operations.** How will you hire and evaluate the Commission's executive director? **It is my understanding that is the responsibility of the City Manager.** How will you work with the Commission's staff? **Primarily by collaboration.** Do you have any basic principles you follow when hiring and managing staff? **Basically, matching job responsibilities with the persons skills.**

7. **Election Commission Budget.** What comments or changes, if any, would you suggest for the Election Commission's budget, in order to make the commission more cost-effective? **I would first have to evaluate the budget and understand how funds are used.** What experience do you have administering and managing budgets? **I am a owner of a real estate business and responsible for all budgets regarding 7 units.**

8. **Operation of the Election Commission.** Do you have any comments on, or changes to propose, in the day-to-day administration of the Commission? **Not enough information to respond.** Has the commission been appropriately responsive to candidates, political parties, and interest groups that request or require its services? **As a candidate, I found them extremely helpful and know legible.** If not, what changes do you propose? How would you evaluate the 2011 reprecincting process? **Too fast and not enough input.** Do you favor having evening meeting and hearings of the election commission? **Yes, the community could attend.** How would you evaluate the Commission's training of election workers? **Ask the workers.** How important is it to you that election day workers live in the communities where they serve? **As long as they can get to the polling site, it is not important. People travel everyday to jobs.**

9. **Election Day Procedures.** How can the Commission avoid problems at polling places on Election Day? **It is impossible to know what "all" the problems will be on election day. However, by evaluating previous problems the election commission can get better and better. Also, anticipating based on the specifics of and election, the commission and address problems.** What role should the Commissioners play in insuring a trouble-free Election Day? **Respond to the Wardens as to what they need throughout the day.** Do you favor the continued use of optical scan voting devises in Cambridge elections? **Yes.** How would you evaluate the way in which the proportional representation "count" was done in November 2011? **It was fair process done very professionally.**

10. **Recount Procedures.** What is your evaluation of the recount procedures of the Commission? **From what I have observed, I think it works well.** How did the commission handle the 2009 School Committee recount? **Very professional.** What changes, if any, would you suggest? **None.** What standards would you use in deciphering disputed ballots? **As difficult as it might be, standards should be considered before you get to that point.**

11. **Voting Rights.** Do you favor voting rights for legal immigrants in municipal elections? **Yes** Do you favor lowering the voting age in municipal elections? **Yes.** Do you favor same-day voter registration? **Need to be very careful with this issue. Open to discussion.** Do you favor requiring all (or any) voters to show a photo ID before they vote? **In the past, I have said no ids, too disenfranchising, after seeing problems, I think we need to come up with some safeguards.** What special problems or opportunities would each such change cause for the Election Commission? **Two major concerns are time and money needed to address these issues.**

12. **Miscellaneous.** Do you have any other suggestions for carrying out the powers and duties of an Election Commissioner? **I think that is an ongoing process. As situations, demographics, and other variables change, we have to constantly evaluation how the powers and duties are carried out.** Is there anything else you would like the Cambridge Democratic City Committee to consider in evaluating your candidacy for the office of Election. **I will listen and do my very best to represent our party.**

Thank you,

Larry Ward

Larry Westley Ward, Sc. D.

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2009-2010 CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MA: **Elected member of the Cambridge City Council.**

- Reviewed and approved \$455 million city administration budget.
- Participated in weekly-televised city council meetings to discuss city business.
- Hosted meetings to collaborate with individual residents and community groups to resolve many contentious public issues.
- Interacted regularly with all forms of the media.
- Visited and worked with Cambridge students and schools on a regular basis.
- Served as Chair Person of University Relations Committee, liaison between City government and local colleges & universities.
- Negotiated agreements and zoning petitions/concerns with university officials and local residents.

2004-present CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS (2010): **Full-time Substitute Teacher.**

2004-2006 Taught ninth and tenth grade physics course at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School. Provided one-on-one and classroom teaching and supervision to students of varied abilities, multiple ethnic backgrounds and diverse socio-economic status. Consulted with parents, behavioral specialists, psychologists, social workers, student mentors and colleagues to ensure the best individual educational plans for students.

1999-2002 **Boston University, Sargent College, Department of Rehabilitation Counseling:**

Participated in recruitment and application review process of master's level minority candidates.

1996-2004 HUMAN SERVICES CONNECTION MAGAZINE: **Founder and Publisher.**

Entrepreneurial founder and publisher of a monthly magazine focused solely on career development for the New England human services community.

- Recruited, hired, trained, motivated, compensated, and evaluated all individuals within the writing, editing, and production/printing processes of the magazine.
- Scheduled interviews and organized a conference, held in Boston, during the 2004 Democratic National Convention, which highlighted former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis as moderator.

- Monitored design and development of corporate website.
- Collaborated with human service agencies throughout New England to obtain employment opportunities for qualified individuals.

1988 - 1995 CAREER SERVICES PROGRAM (CSP), CENTER for PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION, BOSTON UNIVERSITY, Boston, MA

Academic/Job Development Counselor.

Collaborated and coordinated all services for Career Service Program students including recruitment. Interacted with parents, provided counseling, facilitated outside services which included housing, medical, social, and employment.

2011 *Candidate for Cambridge City Council*

Recruited, built, and led campaign committee. Raised and budgeted campaign donations and expenses. Drafted campaign policy positions, organized dozens of volunteers for campaign related activities, collaborated with individuals and groups on community issues, participated in six community sponsored candidate debates/forums; came within 53 votes of winning election.

2001-2005 *Statewide Community Organizer Director: Coalition for Authentic Reform in Education (CARE), and also FairTest, Cambridge, MA.*

Organized and educated parents regarding the potential negative impact of newly implemented MA educational reform policies; spoke at public conferences; developed state and national coalitions; created a network of active and involved citizens. Media appearances included: PBS (Channel 2), New England Cable Network (Channel 8), ABC (Channel 5) and CW (Channel 56), as well as WBUR and WILD radio. Regularly participated in debates with members of the MA Department of Education, via television, radio, and at various public school community forums.

1980 ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, Alexandria, VA.: *Full-time School Teacher (8th grade)*

Prepared and implemented daily classroom lessons. Worked with a small group of Special

Education students; participated in parent-teacher conferences; planned and implemented

various out-of-school activities that often included parent involvement.

EDUCATION

BOSTON UNIVERSITY, Boston, MA

Doctorate of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling, May, 2002

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, College Park, MD

Master of Arts in Education, May, 1983

BOSTON UNIVERSITY, Boston, MA

Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation Services, December, 1979

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Interests: Traveling, Reading, Working out

Community and Volunteer Activities: Day of Service, annual service event in Cambridge, Head Basketball Coach for Cambridge Ballers, Teen Mentor Volunteer

AWARDS

- 2011 nominee for the Cambridge “Go Green” Award for starting ink cartridge recycling program
- 2010 Winner of Citizens for Public Schools Annual Award: distinguished activist for public schools
- 2003 National finalist for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Ira Glasser Racial Justice Fellowship. Fellowship Proposal: *Working for the Reality, Not the Rhetoric of “No Child Left Behind”: A Proposal for Policy Development and Community Organizing: Developing a relationship between public school parents and the ACLU affiliates.*

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

- *Panelist:* Public School Education Forum, University of Massachusetts, Boston (September, 2011)
- *Guest lecturer:* Cambridge Chamber of Commerce (September, 2009)
- *Guest lecturer:* educational issues; Suffolk University, (September 2006)
- *Presenter:* annual conference, Coalition for Authentic Reform in Education (Oct 2006)
- *Guest lecturer:* educational issues; Harvard University (Feb 2005)

PUBLICATIONS

Ward, L. W. (2004) High Stakes Testing. *Response Magazine*, 36 (3), 23.

Ward, L. W. (2002) Doctoral Dissertation: *A Survey Description Direct Care Providers' Satisfaction With Their Supervisors: A Look at Race, Education, Gender and Age.*

BOARD AFFILIATIONS:

2010 – Present	Advisory Board Member , The Salvation Army of Cambridge, MA
2009 – Present	Director and officer , Elizabeth Peabody House, Somerville, MA
2003 - 2010	Ambassador , Cambridge Peace Commission, Cambridge, MA