



CITIZENS UNION CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
ELECTION 2009

Citizens Union would appreciate your responses to the following questions related to policy issues facing the City of New York that are of concern to Citizens Union and the citizens of the City. We plan to make public your responses to this questionnaire in our Voters Directory, on our website, and in other appropriate venues. Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union will use to evaluate candidates who are running for office in order to determine our "Preferred Candidates" for the primary election and "Endorsed Candidates" for the general election. In order to receive Citizens Union's "preferred" or "endorsed" status, in addition to completing the questionnaire, candidates must participate in an interview with Citizens Union's Local Candidates Committee.

We thank you very much for your response.

Candidate Name: JERRY KANN Age: 48

Office to Which You Seek (Re) Election: Council District #: 22

Campaign Address: 25-60 42ND ST, #1F, ASTORIA, NY 11003

Campaign Telephone Number: (718) 728-1092 Fax: ()

Party Affiliation(s): POPULIST Campaign Manager Name:

Website & Email: Jerry Kann 99@yahoo.com

Education: B.A., ENGLISH LITERATURE - CLEVELAND STATE UNIV., CLEVELAND, OHIO

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): PROOFREADER / COPYEDITOR - "TEMP"/FREELANCER

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: CITY COUNCIL, DIST. 22, ON GREEN PARTY LINE - 2001, 2003, & 2005

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES [checked] NO
Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? YES [checked] NO

(Please note: Citizens Union can grant its "Preferred Candidate" and "Endorsed Candidate" rating only to candidates we have interviewed. We will make every effort to interview candidates in each race for City Council.)

Signature of Candidate: [Signature] Date: 7/16/09

I. CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

Please state your position on the following issues by indicating whether you support or oppose each. You may elaborate in the space provided at the end or on additional paper.

VOTING AND ELECTIONS REFORM

- | | | |
|---|----------------|---------------|
| 1. What is your position with respect to allowing voters who are registered as independents to vote in party primaries? | Support | <u>Oppose</u> |
| 2. What is your position on passage of state legislation that would allow referenda initiated by the City Council and/or the public to appear on the ballot at the same time as a referendum initiated by a charter commission appointed by the Mayor? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 3. What is your position on increasing the pay of Election Day poll workers above the current \$200 they are allotted per election event? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 4. What is your position on restructuring New York's current board of elections model to eliminate political party responsibility for overall election administration and replace it with a system that narrows political party involvement to certification of candidate petitions and the actual counting of votes? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
| 5. What is your position on having an election administration system where there is a local elections executive director appointed by the mayor upon recommendation by a new board that is chosen by the mayor and the city council? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

- | | | |
|---|----------------|--------|
| 6. What is your position on implementing "war chest" restrictions that would prohibit a candidate from transferring funds raised in a previous election cycle into a current campaign committee for a different office? | <u>Support</u> | Oppose |
|---|----------------|--------|

7. What is your position on allowing campaign financing for ballot proposals?

Support

Oppose

CITY COUNCIL REFORM

8. What is your position on allowing Council committees to function more independently of the speaker than is presently the case?

Support

Oppose

a. Should committee staff be hired by and report to committee chairs?

Support

Oppose

b. Should committee hearings and votes be scheduled at the direction of the chairs?

Support

Oppose

c. Should committees be able to issue subpoenas by a vote of their members?

Support

Oppose

9. What is your position on:

a. limiting councilmembers' ability to earn outside income?

Support

Oppose

b. making the job of councilmember a full-time position?

Support

Oppose

c. eliminating or limiting stipends for committee chairs and leadership positions?

Support

Oppose

10. What is your position on requiring that any future increase in councilmember compensation not affect those serving in the current term of the council and only be applied prospectively to the following term?

Support

Oppose

11. What is your position on consolidating the current City Council committee structure and reducing the number of overall committees?

Support

Oppose

12. What is your position on term limits for elected officials?

Support

Oppose

13. What is your position on modifying the City Charter to require that changes to term limits may only be approved by the voters?

Support

Oppose

!!

14. What is your position on the recent extension of term limits for the city's elected officials to three consecutive four-year terms? Please explain your answer.

Support

Oppose

That a vote of City Council, after signed into law by the Mayor, can trump ~~of~~ not one but two votes of city residents affirming ~~of~~ term limits of two 4-year terms — that in itself is an abomination, and it's an insult to democracy. — The way it should be: a limit of four consecutive (2)-year terms for all City elected officials.

POLICY ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE

Please state your position on the following issues by indicating whether you support or oppose each, where applicable. Please also use the space provided below each question or on a separate sheet of paper to elaborate on your positions on the questions which require a detailed answer. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

15. Knowing that the police department and commissioner retain ultimate authority for determining whether an officer is guilty and penalty, what is your position on transferring power to the Civilian Complaint Review Board to prosecute cases of police misconduct, such as force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, and offensive language?

Support

Oppose

16. What is your position on changing the current land use process under ULURP to increase the role of community-based planning?

Support

Oppose

See my proposal for ~~Urban~~ elected "Community Councils" on pp. 8 and 9.

17. What is your position regarding the creation of a Charter Revision Commission to review specifically the roles of the various offices of government and how well government has functioned since the 1988 and 1989 charter review commissions?

Support

Oppose

18. What is your position on reforming the current pension funding structure to create multiple tiers for future city government employees?

Support

Oppose

Two-tier (or three-tier) systems are simply ways to divide one group of union members from another and to oppose such "structuring."

a. In FY 2008-09, New York City spent \$12 billion on pensions and fringe benefits for City employees out of a total budget of \$62 billion. What would you do to address the growing pension costs borne by the city and New York City tax payers?

I support expanding the number of people covered by collective bargaining agreements (such as cover City workers). Workers in the private sector need better pension plans. - For the City, to pay for it: see my 1% tax

like proposal on over-1500,000 earners (pp. 6 and 9)

19. What is your position with respect to the City Council passing a resolution calling upon the State Legislature to establish a State Constitutional Convention? Support Oppose

w/ the proviso proposed by Assemb. Sandy Galef (A090) that no elected officials be allowed to be delegates

a. If support, what are the three most important areas that need improvement?

- ⓐ Abolish state "authorities" that have gone astray from their original mission (e.g., NY Power Authority)
- ⓑ Term limits - say, ~~2~~ ^{consecutive} 2-year terms for legislators
- ⓒ Campaign finance reform - Cut contrib's down to FEC levels - \$2300 annually for both prim' and gen'l

b. Do you believe that greater home rule should be granted to the City of New York? If so, in what areas should further sovereignty be given?

- ⓐ Housing - Repeal the Westcott Law. If the Convention itself could accomplish this, so much the better.
- ⓑ Expanded powers for DCP (City's own prim' and gen'l)
- ⓒ Education - So long as basic NYS standards are met, NYC should be in charge of its own educational system

20. Taking into consideration the lessons learned from the debates surrounding congestion pricing and the Ravitch Commission's recommendations to provide the MTA with long-term funding, what would you propose to address the MTA's fiscal solvency issues and ensure that the burden for funding the MTA is equitably distributed among all stakeholders?

I support the Kheel-Komanoff plan (see website of Transportation Alternatives) to add a fee paid by taxicab riders and to reduce fares for the subway and bus fares that are already too high.

21. What would you propose in terms of creating a greater role for the city council in determining and deciding the city budget?

Perhaps the best way to do that would be to drop the step of the Mayor submitting his ~~the~~ Revised Executive Budget and go straight from the Jan. 16th Prelim. Budget into frank negotiations between Council and the Mayor. At least one former Councilmember (Ronnie Eldridge) ~~sped~~ has suggested the Mayor's Revised Budget was just a throwback to his original proposals.

22. What is your position regarding the City's past practice of using surplus tax revenues to pay down future health cost and pension obligations, and the decision not to do so this year?

which seems to add an unnecessary step and a waste of time.

Any time there is a bona fide surplus, it is ~~then~~ a good idea to set some aside for (inevitable) future expenses. As for this year's decision not to do so, ~~but~~ I'm afraid I'm not well enough informed about that decision to speak to the point.

23. What is your view of how the taxes paid by New Yorkers compare to the value that is received in City services? Do you believe that taxes should be raised or lowered? To the extent you believe taxes should be changed, please provide specific proposals about what taxes you would raise and what services you would cut, if you didn't raise taxes, listed in order of greatest magnitude.

I support an increase of 1% in the City's Personal Income Tax (PIT) on residents earning over \$500,000. (This would apply to ~~any~~ ~~resident~~ anyone with a ~~tax~~ home in NYC — regardless of whether they ^{also} own homes outside the city.) This could amply pay for dropping City income tax on very poor residents (with incomes under \$20K, e.g.) ~~that~~ These are my (somewhat) substantial amendments to a plan proposed by the Drum Major Institute. (They (Instead of 1%, they offer the figure of 0.085% — far too small an increase on people who are among the most privileged people on the planet Earth.)

24. Many policy advocates champion the creation of a more diversified economy, and one that is less reliant on Wall Street. What is your position on such a plan? If you support it, what would you do to diversify the city's economy? How would you adjust spending in New York City to accommodate the anticipated reduction in tax revenue as the tax base shifts to lower paying jobs?

I support diversifying our economy. We must massively support research, development, and even manufacturing of new, renewable energy technology. This is the future of ~~the~~ the global economy over the long term. Ecologically sound energy will be the major ~~economic~~ economic change of the next few decades, worldwide.

25. What would you propose the Department of Education do to increase the ability for parents and teachers to become more meaningfully involved in the education system? What other positive changes can be made to the New York City public school system?

Back in 2002, I proposed (at a conference at the Borough ~~Pres~~ Hall in Queens) maintaining Community School Boards, but restricting Board membership to residents ~~that~~ who have children in the district's public schools. — We have to restore many extra-curricular programs at all City schools.

26. What would you propose to increase the transparency of the Board of Elections in the City of New York's operations and accountability to the city and its voters?

I have personally been impacted (to use a polite word) by certain informal practices at 32 Broadway. One of my competitors in 2005 got onto the ballot with perhaps 200 signatures, compared to the 1800 that my campaign collected. The 200-sign petition had passed the Board's "weight test." Such preposterous standards need to be exposed and national.

27. What would you propose to further enhance transparency regarding the relationships between council members, their families, and nonprofits that receive funding from New York City?

formal procedures need to be codified.

In 2005 I filed a Conflict of Interest Board complaint against Councilmember Peter Vellone Jr. for promoting Commerce Bank in violation of the City Charter provisions regulating conflicts of interest. So far as I know, no action was ever taken. So even in regard to for-profit shenanigans, City law seems to be toothless. Obviously these laws need to be strengthened in regard to non-profits as well.

Additional Comments:

I will send you a copy of
my paper, "How Elected Community
Councils' can make ~~the~~ New York
City Government ~~the~~ More Responsive
and More Effective."



CANDIDATE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Citizens Union is adding a new element to its evaluation of candidates running for office. As a candidate who presently does not hold elected office, CU is interested in knowing your top five campaign promises you are making to the voters during this campaign for this position.

If elected, Citizens Union will use these promises to evaluate your performance while in office, as well as, to evaluate your candidacy in the future.

We thank you very much for your response. Please feel free to use additional paper if the space provided is not sufficient.

TOP FIVE 2009 CAMPAIGN PROMISES

1. Raise the PIT ~~on those~~ 1% on those earning above \$50,000^{annum}
2. Re-vamp the Rent Guidelines Board to make it more ^{fair to} tenants.
3. Expand small business loans in poor neighborhoods
4. Subsidize ~~some~~ renewable (non-polluting) energy research in NYC
5. Establish ~~the~~ ^{the} elected "Community Councils" in each City Council district, mandate the ^{City} Council member to report to the Community Council ~~on~~ on a monthly basis, and give the 51 Councils a role in making our local laws instead of ~~it~~ allowing them a mere advisory function. ~~And~~ (Were this accomplished, ~~it~~ ~~it~~ it need hardly be said that we could then abolish the Community Boards and the Borough Boards.)