

**2013 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR
CANDIDATES FOR BOROUGH PRESIDENT**

Citizens Union would appreciate your response to the following questions related to policy issues facing the City of New York that are of concern to Citizens Union and residents 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.

If you seek our support, we would also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process. We will not automatically schedule an interview with you if you return this questionnaire, as we prioritize competitive races and resources constrain us from evaluating all races. Please contact us if you wish to be interviewed. We thank you very much for your response.

Candidate Name: Elias J. Weir Age: 55

Campaign Address: 1258 East 101st Street Brooklyn, NY 11236

Campaign Telephone Number: (718) 810-1506 Fax: () N/A

Party Affiliation(s): Democrat /but running on Conservative line Campaign Manager Name: Milton B.

Williams

Website & Email: No Website presently Email: eliasweir@aol.com

Education: B.S., New York Institute of Technology, Chelsea Vocational High School

Occupation/Employer (or years in currently held elected office): Political Consultant 2009 -

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: Canarsie Civic Association, South Canarsie Civic Association, Canarsie By Choice, Community Activist

Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES XXX NO _____
(Please note: Citizens Union can only grant its support to candidates we have interviewed. If you would like to be interviewed, please follow up with Citizens Union staff, as resources constrain us from interviewing every candidate.)

Have you completed requisite campaign finance filings? YES _____ NO XX

Signature of Candidate: Elias J. Weir Date: 10/02/2013

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.

1. What is your position on changing the current land use process under the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) to require that community-based 197-a plans are responded to when other development proceeds in conflict with those plans?	Support
2. Do you support ending mid-year amendments to the Annual Citywide Statement of Needs and including other than city-owned property in the Atlas of City Owned Property so a more comprehensive picture of services, facilities, and environmental burdens is known to inform future development?	Support
3. What is your position on designating urban planners for use by community boards and requiring borough presidents to report to the Council the manner in which they advertise and make community board appointments? (Int. No. 913)	Support
4. What is your position on establishing a formal, standardized and transparent process for community board appointments including written applications, interviews of candidates, and filling vacancies within 30 days?	Support
5. What is your position on independent budgeting for the following:	
a. the borough presidents	Support
b. the Conflicts of Interest Board	Support
c. the public advocate	Support
d. community boards	Support
6. Do you support standardizing term limits to five consecutive two-year terms for members of all community boards?	Support
7. If elected, would you post on your website all applications received by your office for capital and expense discretionary funds, as well as groups which ultimately received funding?	Support
8. Do you support empowering borough presidents to require the appearance of borough commissioner of city agencies for monthly interagency meetings led by the borough presidents?	Support

9. What is your position on granting the borough presidents the ability to make an additional appointment to the Board of Standards and Appeals?	Support
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Additional Comments: It is important to start to rebuild and gain the public's trust. I support all the above, since the office of the Borough President has the authority to address and make changes.

As the Borough President of Brooklyn, I will use the power of the office to support and respect the people who live in Brooklyn. My office will recruit and develop a staff that will canvass the various communities to obtain feedback on what can be done to improve the quality of life in this borough. These concerns will be addressed immediately.

1. How would you use the office of the borough president to impact city policies affecting the borough?

Throughout Brooklyn, we are faced with closing of major hospitals. As the Borough President, I will be a strong advocate in seeing that these hospitals are never closed because of lack of funding.

Brooklyn has the second highest rate of unemployment of all the counties in New York State. As Borough President I will direct my staff to find solutions to close the gap and help people get back to work.

Brooklyn has been progressing economically, but despite this growth we still have individuals out of work. We must find ways to continually attract new businesses.

I believe in a good and supportive educational system and as Brooklyn Borough President I will work closely with the Department of Education to see that no child falls thru the cracks. We need to incorporate financial literacy programs for all grade-levels in order to guide student to a better financial future.

2. Developers argue ULURP should be streamlined while community groups and advocates believe more opportunities for input should be provided or that voting thresholds should be changed for application approval. Others note that the ULURP process does not integrate the need to plan for post 9/11 security issues in development. What reforms to ULURP do you support?

Every community has a right to be protected under the ULURP process; therefore, the people living in the community who have addressed such concerns, should be taken seriously and not ignored. As Brooklyn Borough President, I will make sure that the Community Boards and those who have issues concerning the community they live in, are addressed.

There should be plans in place that addresses catastrophes, such as Hurricane Sandy. I will introduce guidelines that key officials will be privy of to help get people or communities back "on their feet" quickly in the event of "acts of God". Also, plans to secure our infrastructure will be kept top of mind.

I believe the City of New York should have had emergency plans in place for evacuating the people. Although not every community was hit as hard as others, the matter of evacuation should have been conveyed prior to any disaster. As Borough President, I will see to it that such a plan is in place if we where to face such a disaster in the future. (Although we can never be fully prepared, we can have a strategic plan of action in place that can minimize lost).

3. The borough presidents make recommendations to the mayor on capital projects as part of the budget process. All of the boroughs combined additionally receive 5 percent of the appropriations in the mayor's capital budget divided between the boroughs based on formulas related to land size and population. What would be your priorities for capital projects in the borough?

Several Senior Homes are in need of repair and remodeling, I will allocate funding to make repairs.

Community Centers also require structural repair and remodeling, I will allocate funding to make repairs.

The American Legion Post for war veterans have been neglected for quite sometime and are in need of repair. I will allocate funds for this cause.

I will allocate funds for schools in need of repairs. I will also help fund field trips for students.

Borough presidents are charged with establishing a planning office that, among other functions, provides training and technical assistance to community boards on land use issues. How would you use the office to help community boards fulfill their charter mandated responsibilities in providing feedback on land use proposals while enabling the boards to make decisions independent of the borough president's office?

The Office of the Brooklyn Borough President will provide the needed technical support to assure that all the community boards are well versed on the land use issues, While allowing the Community Boards to work independently of the Borough office and only extending assistance when required.

4. Borough presidents are charged with making hundreds of appointments. What criteria would you use for appointments to positions appointed by the borough president (the Panel on Educational Policy, City Planning Commission, community boards, etc.)? What processes would you put in place for advertising open positions and recruiting qualified candidates that represent the diversity of New York City?

As Borough President, I would use a diversified method. I would open the process to every qualified individual throughout Brooklyn and hire the most qualified person for the job. For example for PEP, I would look for a person who has served on the PTA or the SLT which shows their devotion to the educational system. Also, they must have a child or be a guardian of a child in the educational system, not a grandparent or "use" to have a child in that particular school. For City Planning Commission you must have some form of education other than a H.S. Degree and have working knowledge of the area. For the Community Boards, I would hire independent thinking individuals who can think "out the box" and posses leadership qualities

when it comes to making the right decisions for their community. Also, they should have an attitude to embrace change, especially, when it is bring progress to their community.

5. Borough presidents can hold hearings on any matter of public interest and are charged with establishing a borough-wide complaint program to report public complaints to better service delivery by agencies. How would you use these powers and the position of the office to amplify the concerns of borough residents? What issues might you focus on to improve agency performance or draw public attention to?

Throughout the years, I have been adamant about improving several issues, I do believe that some parts of Brooklyn need to be cleaned up, have safer streets, and adhere to the laws of noise pollution. I intend on addressing these issues with the mayor, police department, sanitation department and leaders/church officials and challenge them to bring about a positive change. I am very concerned when it comes to the safety of people who are afraid to say something because they live in fear of retaliation. I will make sure that the appropriate departments are fulfilling their responsibility of taking care of the matters that need to be addressed first. Nonetheless, these complaints will be addressed in the appropriate time, even if it means creating a special task unit of volunteers that can be recruited to assist in addressing these complaints.

6. The borough presidents have the authority to introduce legislation yet few borough presidents in recent years have exercised this authority. Would you utilize this power, and, if so, what legislation would you introduce?

Yes.

Community Board Mangers should be hired through a screening process that qualifies them for the position instead of being handed the job.

7. How would you leverage the office of Borough President to address any of the following issues, if not discussed in answering previous questions:
 - a. Affordable Housing
 - b. Public Safety
 - c. Public Transportation
 - d. Health and the Environment

- e. Economic Development
- f. Education

a. As the high cost of living becomes a challenge for some of us, the need for Affordable Housing becomes more of a reality to those who are not able to pay the high rent. As the Brooklyn Borough President, I will be concern with providing solutions to help in keeping families in their home and giving others the opportunity to be able to afford a home to rent.

b. With the recent decision to over turn stop and frisk, Public Safety will be a major concern since criminal offenders will not fear carrying concealed guns. We will have to continue working with churches as well as the District Attorney's office to continue with the buy back program. I will advocate for a restructuring of stop and frisk that will help implement the needed changes so that the communities who have come against it would understand it is vitally needed to prevent crimes and keep our neighborhoods safe.

c. In terms of Public Transportation, these are the following issues:

More express trains and buses are needed during rush hours. I come to understand there is a major problem with R lines and riders have to wait a substantial amount of time for trains to arrive. This should not be happening during rush hour. (Maybe off peak hours there might be a slight time delay). Also, there are concerns about the keeping the subway cars and platform clean. Overall, I haven't heard of major problems with Public Transportation. Announcements during train and bus rides have brought about some change in the behavior of commuters.

d. Adequate health care is a major concern with individuals today. Also, with the threat of closing hospitals, it would make it difficult for those who need immediate medical assistance to get to a nearby hospital. As I mentioned, I will advocate and fight hard for our local hospital not to close. As for the environment, we need to be mindful to curb our dogs, don't liter and keep our gutters free from debris to prevent our sewers from clogging. Saving plants and greenery as well as, keeping our waterways clean are needed for our ecosystem and environment to

strive. The Brooklyn Borough President office will advocate for clean living throughout the Borough.

e. Economic Development is a must for Borough President Office. I look forward in inviting new companies to Brooklyn to do business and provide new jobs. Also, we need to continue building on the established businesses. In addition, we must move forward and provide assistance to small businesses and support our local businesses. We also need to have additional training for those who are unemployed to help them move back to employment. All these factors taken into consideration should help lower the unemployment rate which has the highest unemployment rate of all the boroughs in New York. I am business savvy, have an extrovert personality and I like seeing businesses do well. I believe these are qualities needed for the Brooklyn Borough President and do bring in businesses. When businesses do well the economy does well.

f. We need to keep our students focused and energized so that they can achieve their goal and aim high for success. Every child has the ability to learn. We need educators and school officials who “cheer on” every child and let them know that they can succeed, regardless of their background. We need school staff that will make a positive difference in students’ lives. Although there are problem within the public school system, we need to address **why these situations occur and come up with real solutions**. I don’t believe any child sets out to fail. Teachers should be equipped to know about the different styles of learning and incorporate them in their lessons/teaching. I do believe “no child should be left behind”. As the Brooklyn Borough President, I will advocate for implementing ways to encourage learning and foster in **safe and clean environment** which is conducive to learning and helps students be more productive in order to achieve their goals.

Additional Comments:



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 2013 CAMPAIGN PROMISES

1. Establish an in house department that will canvass the borough for problems that needs to be addressed.
2. Some of the Senior Citizen Homes are in need of repair. As Brooklyn Borough President I will make it my personal business to visit ever Senior Home and inspect what is needed.
3. More Affordable Homes for Senior's are needed and as Brooklyn Borough President, I will be addressing this topic and set the plans in motion.
4. As Brooklyn Borough President, I will set aside areas in the park that are mark **No Noise Zone** for those who enjoy reading and just taking time to relax .

5. Once a month during the fishing season I will charter a fishing boat and contestant will have the chance to win a free trip. Number of individual yet to be determined.

**Please return to: Citizens Union, Local Candidates Committee
via fax to 212.227.0345 or via email to
Call 212-227-0342 Rachael Fauss ext. 22 or Alex Camarda ext. 24 with any questions.**