



Candidate Questionnaire
Local Candidates Committee
New York City Council Elections 2017

Citizens Union appreciates your response to the following questionnaire related to policy issues facing New York City and our interest in reforming city and state government. Please return the questionnaire to us as soon as possible, and no later than June 28th. Responses to these questions will be one of several factors Citizens Union uses to evaluate candidates running for the New York City Council, and to issue our preference for the Primary and endorsement for the General Election. Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.

If you seek our support, we will also need to schedule an interview with you as part of the evaluation process. Please contact us if you wish to be interviewed.

We plan to make responses to this questionnaire public on our website, printed voters directory, and other appropriate venues.

We thank you very much for your response.

Biographical Information

Candidate Name: Rachel Lyn Honig
Party Affiliation(s): Democratic Age: 45
Education: BA, Smith College Art History and Ethics
Office Sought (including district): City Council, District 4
Occupation/Employer: Small Business Owner/Self/Amplify Cooperative, a public relations and communications consultancy
Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement: Board of Advisors, MA in Communications, Baruch College; East River Fifties

(Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.)

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name: Joshua Valentine Additional Staff Contact:
Address: PO Box 6735, New York, NY 10150
Telephone: 646.389.1133 Fax:
Website: www.honigfornewyork.com Email: rachel@honigfornewyork.com
Twitter: @HonigForNY Facebook: facebook.com/HonigForNewYork

Affirmations

Have you completed required campaign finance filings? YES / NO
Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee? YES / NO

(Please note: interviews are prerequisites of being considered for Citizens Union endorsements.)

Signature of Candidate: *Rachel Lyn Hong*

Date: June 28, 2017

I. POLICY QUESTIONS

Please state whether you support or oppose the following reform measures, and feel free to elaborate in the space provided at the end or on additional paper.

VOTING AND ELECTIONS REFORM

1. What is your position with respect to eliminating party primaries and establishing a non-partisan election system in which all candidates and all voters participate in the first round and the top two candidates advance to the second round?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support / <input type="checkbox"/> Oppose
2. What is your position on instituting Instant Runoff Voting for all citywide offices and for all special elections for city offices?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support / <input type="checkbox"/> Oppose
3. What is your position on creating a voluntary municipal poll worker program to supplement poll worker recruitment by district leaders?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support / <input type="checkbox"/> Oppose
4. What is your position on requiring the Board of Elections to report performance metrics to the City Council that conform to the Mayor's Management Report?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support / <input type="checkbox"/> Oppose
5. What is your position on modifying the City Charter to require that laws enacted by referendum only be changed through approval by the voters?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support / <input type="checkbox"/> Oppose

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

6. What is your position on prohibiting participants in the city's campaign finance program from using public matching funds to purchase strategic campaign consulting services from firms that also provide lobbying services?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support / <input type="checkbox"/> Oppose
7. What is your position on increasing the Campaign Finance Board's public matching grants from a partial match of 55% to a full match of funds raised (Int. 1130-A)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Support / <input type="checkbox"/> Oppose

CITY COUNCIL REFORM

8. How do you feel the reformed bill drafting process is going under the enacted 2014 Council Rules Reforms and do you think we need a more independent process similar to New York State Legislature's bill drafting commission?

I believe the independent drafting unit was a solid first step.

While most bills are still drafted by committee counsel who have developed areas of expertise, the ability to propose and draft a bill that may fall outside the walls of committee responsibility is essential. We need the ability for creative, out of the box thinking and the New York State Legislature's process allows for just that. I would be in favor of expanding the City Council model to look more like the State's.

I do celebrate the new tracking system as well, which adds greater levels of transparency and show where intentional or unintentional delays lie.

9. What is your position on the following proposals enabling Council committees to function more effectively and independently of the speaker:	
a. Should committee chairs have the ability to hire at least one committee staffer?	✓ 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
d. Now that committee chair stipends have been eliminated what is your position on reducing the overall number of committees so members can participate more meaningfully in fewer issues?	Support / Oppose
10. What is your position on greater disclosure of councilmembers' outside income?	Support / Oppose
11. When the Quadrennial Compensation Commission is reconvened, what is your position on requiring that any future increase in councilmember compensation only apply prospectively to the following term?	✓ Support / Oppose
12. What is your position on ensuring a more equitable and needs-based distribution of discretionary funding?	✓ Support / Oppose
13. What is your position on increasing transparency of discretionary funding by requiring the list of capital and expense funds and their sponsors be provided to Councilmembers and the public three days in advance of any vote, and expanding the online searchable database of expense funds to include all capital fund recipients and applicants?	✓ Support / Oppose
14. What is your position on extending term limits from two four-year terms to three four-year terms?	Support / Oppose
15. What is your position on making all actions designed to influence any City Council outcome, including the choice of Speaker, reportable as a lobbying expense?	Support / Oppose

PUBLIC SAFETY AND OVERSIGHT OF POLICE MISCONDUCT

16. What is your position on establishing the Commission to Combat Police Corruption (CCPC) as a permanent commission in the City Charter while empowering the CCPC to issue subpoenas?	✓ Support / Oppose
17. What is your position on enhancing the Civilian Complaint Review Board's (CCRB) authority to initiate an investigation into reported or known incidents of police misconduct without receipt of a formal complaint?	✓ Support / Oppose
18. What is your position on granting the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) with the authority to prosecute officers found guilty of lying during CCRB investigations?	✓ Support / Oppose
19. What is your position on reinstating the zero tolerance penalty for false official statements by public officers?	✓ Support / Oppose
20. What is your position on requiring the Police Commissioner to explain divergence from NYPD trial judge and CCRB disciplinary recommendations and to make the explanation public?	✓ Support / Oppose
21. What is your position on requiring the NYPD to publish a regular report of use of force incidents with data disaggregated by race?	Support / Oppose

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BUDGET REFORM

23. What is your position on establishing independent budgeting for: a. the borough presidents?	✓ Support / Oppose
b. Conflicts of Interest Board?	✓ Support / Oppose
c. the public advocate?	✓ Support / Oppose
d. community boards?	✓ Support / Oppose
24. What is your position on making the budget process more transparent by clearly defining and limiting units of appropriation?	✓ Support / Oppose
25. What is your position on release of revenue projections (other than property taxes) prior to Council hearings on the Executive budget?	✓ Support / Oppose

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY BOARD REFORM

26. What is your position on designating urban planners for use by community boards and requiring borough president's report to the Council the manner in which they advertise and make community board appointments?	✓ Support / Oppose
27. 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 / Oppose

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

28. In November, voters in New York will be asked whether they wish to hold a constitutional convention to amend the New York State Constitution. What is your position on holding such a convention?	✓ Support / Oppose
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29. If you support the constitutional convention, what actions, if any, will you take to ensure that it takes place? If you oppose the convention, what will you do to defeat it?

Discourse generally about the State Constitution, its content and its parameters is important. Civic engagement is critical in any effort to create to change, and the citizens of New York must clearly see the constraints that their lawmakers work within each and every day. In order to impose meaningful, long-term reform, I support a state constitutional convention, to allow the citizens of New York to have a chance to weigh in on those issues that affect us all. Frankly, more should be done in the messaging of this issue to the voters before November, underscoring its importance and the issues behind it.

30. Last year, Citizens Union helped craft and push for the enactment of a law that placed political contribution limits and disclosure requirements on nonprofits that are formed by, or affiliated with, elected officials, which helped prevent some significant features of an emerging "pay-to-play" culture in New York City. Do you have any other ideas to further limit such a culture and create a better environment where contributions, either personal or political do not unduly influence the actions of elected officials?

First, I support the Citizen's Union's advocacy on this issue. Part of the very reason I am running is to combat that very pay-to-play culture.

As a citizen candidate, I feel I can be more objective, and can come into any issue not beholden to a special interest before I walk in the room.

By encouraging more "private citizens" to run, we can create a true culture of democracy.

The State Constitutional convention which can create some meaningful voter reform is one such first step. Once the loopholes for lobbyists,

investigations into consulting firms getting special deals for preferred candidates, and lack of overt financial disclosures are debated publicly, we

will begin to see meaningful reform. Too much of our government operates in the shadows and suddenly buildings go up, or affordable housing decreases

without proper transparency much less discussion.

Please use the space provided or a separate sheet of paper to elaborate on your positions on the issues contained in the previous pages. You may also provide additional information on any actions that you have taken or plan to take to advance your positions on these issues.

The idea that the New York Senate Ethics committee met two weeks ago for the first time in 8 years is exemplary of the fact that there is no public

dialogue about ethics. This should be a word used broadly and an ethos adopted universally. Whether affording greater liberties to the Joint Commission

on Public Ethics or creating dialogue in other ways, revived attention on government ethics is a cornerstone of my campaign.

Question 9: While committees can be onerous, we run the risk of important issues falling to the bottom of a truly dense agenda. Until there is a FULL independent drafting process, we can not limit the amount of committees as we must continue not stifle greater dialogue, greater creativity, and broader solutions.

Regarding #10, As a first-time candidate, the COIB disclosures feel pretty comprehensive, but I am open to additional language as appropriate.

And #11, I reserve my answer until I actually assume office and can better assess one's ability to be effective in a four-year term.

responses left blank, I do not feel that I have enough knowledge of the issue at hand to respond. As a citizen now, or as an
will not unilaterally support or oppose an issue for which I do not have sufficient grounding or knowledge.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal lines. Each line is composed of a top blue line, a middle red line, and a bottom blue line, creating a three-line grid for letter formation.

II. CAMPAIGN PROMISES MADE TO VOTERS

As a candidate who presently does not hold elected office, what are 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.

Please feel free to use additional paper if the space provided is not sufficient, and to affix additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements. We thank you very much for your response.

TOP FIVE 2017 CAMPAIGN PROMISES OR GOALS

1. I am running to add more pragmatism and transparency to City Hall. I will stand up to my colleagues and the Mayor when appropriate as I am a citizen candidate not beholden to anyone on Day 1. I want to bring competent and non-partisan leadership to City Hall. As a concerned citizen advocating for greater public engagement, I will represent the views of my District before my own.

2. I believe we have reached a crisis situation in our loss of Small Businesses. Rent reform is critical to allowing our small businesses to stabilize and grow in our community. I will work diligently to get our vacant storefronts filled, and to keep our mom and pop shops thriving in District 4 and throughout the City. I support bringing a version of the Small Business Jobs Survival Act to the floor as this legislation has just gotten kicked down the road from one administration to the next.

3. I will fight to preserve our waterways and open spaces. As a waterfront city, we have a responsibility to our residents to optimize the recreational uses of our parks and waterways. We also have an equal responsibility to evaluate storm protection measures for those same waterways to be better prepared in the next Super Storm.

4. I will challenge my peers in Albany to create significant transit reform. We have an aging infrastructure that can not only handle its current load, but can not allow for increases. Our subways are not only old but unsafe. As we encourage more and more New Yorkers to be environmentally sound in their use of public transportation, we MUST ensure that it is effective and SAFE.

5. City Hall reform. I support any measure which limits the real or perceived power of the Speaker. I will fight for reform that allows for greater participation and representation for all members without fear of retribution.

III. ETHICAL REPRESENTATION OF CONSTITUENTS

Citizens Union believes that all New Yorkers deserve to be represented by officials who work for the public interest and honor public trust. With the corruption conviction of recent state legislative leaders, we seek to endorse a candidate who will demonstrate that she/he will honor the full commitment of the oath of office, and will always represent the public interest above all else.

Please tell us how you have and would continue to conduct the political affairs of this office in an upright manner, and restore the public trust in your district.

My campaign is one to bring non-partisan competency to City Hall. As stated earlier, I believe it is the responsibility of our representatives to honor the views of their District, before their own.

In my role as Director of Special Projects, New York State Council on the Arts, I saw first hand the ethical disbursement of state funds to deserving arts organizations and I know transparency, and objectivity is something that can be achieved.

In the private sector, I have held my employers accountable, and as a business owner myself, I hold myself accountable to high standards of ethics and trust.

I believe City Hall does not always represent the public interest. Our NYCHA homes are crumbling, there are 60,000 homeless New Yorkers, there is lead in the water in public schools, and we are spending the highest rate per student in the country to educate our youth, with sub par results. With billions of dollars pouring into NYCHA and Education each year, we need greater transparency as to why we have poor results, and no solutions.

As a citizen candidate, my pledge is to fight for the issues my constituents care about, even if it means taking unpopular positions against special interests.

This is a campaign to bring competency back to City Hall.

we need a return to good government. Of the people, by the people, and for the people... as it was originally intended.

PLEASE SEE WWW.HONIGFORNEWYORK.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ISSUES AND STATEMENTS.

Please return to: Citizens Union, Local Candidates Committee, 299 Broadway, Suite 700 New York, NY 10007
Via email to candidates@citizensunion.org or fax to 212.227.0345 • Call us at 212-227-0342 with questions.