



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: Liam McCabe	
Party Affiliation(s): Republican	Age: 38
Education: BS, St. Francis College, Brooklyn, NY	
Office Sought (including district): City Council, 43rd District	
Occupation/Employer: full-time candidate	

Previous Offices, Campaigns and Community/Civic Involvement:
 I have worked in constituent services and other capacities on the staff of Congressman Dan Donovan and Congressman Michael Grimm, was the campaign manager for Councilman Eric Ulrich and political strategist for Former State Senator David Storobin. In 2015, I founded the Willie McCabe Run, a memorial run in the Bay Ridge, Brooklyn community that raises funds for non-profits that assist veterans.
 (Please feel free to affix any additional information such as a résumé, campaign brochure, or issue statements.)

Campaign Contact Information

Campaign Manager Name: Gerry O'Brien	Additional Staff Contact:
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Affirmations

Have you completed required campaign finance filings?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES / NO
Are you willing to be interviewed by CU's Local Candidates Committee?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES / NO

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

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?	Support / Oppose
2. What is your position on instituting Instant Runoff Voting for all citywide offices and for all special elections for city offices?	Support / Oppose
3. What is your position on creating a voluntary municipal poll worker program to supplement poll worker recruitment by district leaders?	Support / 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?	Support / 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?	Support / 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?	Support / 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)?	Support / 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 do not think that the City Council should be following the State Legislature on much of anything.

The single biggest power that a legislature has is to not vote on legislation. We need to empower individual members of the City Council to bring their own legislation independent of the influence of committee chairs.

Having an independent bill drafting committee prevents bills from getting bureaucratized. It further democratizes the City Council to let individual members have their voices shared in a way that is not oppressed by leadership. The current reform allows this type of democratization for the bill drafting process. Currently, legal counsels of committee chairs still play a role in the drafting process.

The independent bill drafting committee limits the influence of committee chairs. Expanding the bill drafting committee puts more power in the hands of the members than in the hands of committee chairs. It prevents suppression and bureaucracy and it empowers new members to draft their own legislation.

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:	Support / Oppose
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?
 I would publicly disapprove and I would encourage a No Vote among my constituents.

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?

I support the disclosure of donations. I also would try to employ the Conflicts of Interest Board.

Further, I recommend open audits for all non-profits that receive government money through discretionary funding.

I believe that non-profit staff members of publicly funded non-profit organizations should be placed under the purview of the Conflicts of Interest Board.

As a member, I would recommend auditing the non-profits and the services that they state they are performing.

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.

1. I support automatic runoffs for municipal elections, not for state and federal elections.

4. Regarding the Board of Elections, both parties should be represented. Human Resource reforms are needed to make sure voters get better service on election day.

6. Candidates need to hire professionals to run campaigns, but hiring lobbyists became a part of the phenomenon of campaigns turning into slush funds that are supported by private interests, and that is not acceptable.

7. I support the current system of matching 55% and I could find a better use of taxpayer dollars than to be used to fund political campaigns at the 100% match rate. 100% public matching takes away the impact of private citizens making donations.

9. c. I support this in limited circumstances to the extent that it is under the purview of municipal affairs

9. d. The city government is a \$80B entity that is complicated and needs committees to look at different areas/weigh those complications.

9. e. This should be a non-issue because outside income was effectively banded.

13. Yes, and it should not be limited to capital funds. I would focus on the pay structure and relationships in non-profit organizations that receive discretionary funding. Any entity that receives discretionary funds should be subject to an open audit.

14. The voters approved two 4-year term limits in a referendum.

15. Members should use appropriate means to advocate for a speaker that they support. I agree with current campaign finance reporting requirements and the City Council decision to put certain non-profits like the Campaign for One New York under the Campaign Finance Act. Anything further than that, in terms of who a member wants to advocate for, should be up to that member's discretion.

16. We have enough law enforcement entities. The issue is investigation and enforcement by those organizations. Adding more organizations does not always help the situation. The police corruption scandal a few years ago was unfortunate, but the corrupt officers were brought to justice by existing entities.

18. I support officers having to submit depositions under oath and any violation of that oath should be prosecuted. All prosecution needs to be referred to the District Attorney's Office.

19. I fully support transparency. In the context of a hearing or deposition, when one is under oath, absolutely. I would not extend this rule to public appearances or media interviews when individuals sometimes communicate in a more rhetorical tone.

20. Criminal process and administrative process could be at play here. If there is an administrative issue it should not intersect with criminal prosecution and the two should not overlap.

21. Cases of police force should be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Circumstances should be transparent and published to the public and should not be categorized based on meta-data in an attempt to try and make a commentary on the police force as a whole. All this information is public. It is not the government's responsibility to break down the statistics further than that.

23. Unsure what type of budgeting these questions refer to, so would need further clarification in order to consider supporting.

26. I am in favor of reforming the process. I think that it takes more than transparency to change the power structure. I would consider having participatory Community Board appointments. I would hold an election and appoint whoever my constituents chose.

27. I support putting Community Board applications online so people can review.

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. Prevent Illegal Home Conversions** - Illegal home conversions are tearing at the seams of our neighborhoods. Homes zoned for single and two families are being converted into multiple illegal Single Room Occupancies, resulting in the following: ~~dangerous construction practices that make structures unsafe; fire hazards and public health risks; eroding property values and quality of life; school overcrowding; overburdened resources including sanitation and emergency services.~~ To combat and prevent illegal home conversions, I will bring the Department of Sanitation, the FDNY, the Department of Buildings, the Administration for Children's Services, Department of Environmental Protection, and other agencies together to discuss how to meet needs of business owners and residents neighborhoods with illegal conversions. I will make it a priority to work with community leaders, the New York City Environmental Control Board, and other agencies to stop illegal home conversions and will push government agencies to look closely at tax records so that landlords of illegally converted buildings who are evading taxes by lying about number of tenants and income are prosecuted and operations are shut down.
- 2. Hold the MTA Accountable** - As a City Council Member, I will hold the MTA accountable for insufficient, inadequate service and price gouging. The MTA is out of control because it has no accountability. I can help to bring accountability by making MTA board positions elected, not appointed. The MTA is backlogged by bureaucracy. Repairs are slow, expensive and inconvenient.

As a citizen, I have already begun this fight on behalf of my neighbors by co-sponsoring a petition to require MTA Board Members to earn their seats by election, rather than appointment, giving our neighborhoods control over the system they rely upon to get to and from work every day.
- 3. Improve Quality of Life** - Residents of Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, Bensonhurst and Bath Beach are finding that their quality of life is declining at the same time they are seeing increases in taxes and hidden fees. I will address my potential constituents' concerns in the following areas: package stealing, graffiti, and litter; trespassing; excessive ticketing; impossible parking.

I promise to fight for the rights of homeowners, renters, and their families who must be able to feel safe and comfortable in their homes and neighborhoods. My goals are to get the City to eliminate non-working fire hydrants to free up parking spaces; put tougher restrictions on commercial vehicle parking on residential blocks; create parking spaces out of currently unused street space in high volume areas; limit alternate side parking regulations.

I aim to create a task force to improve outreach to the homeless and the addicted, and to increase and improve opportunities to connect with the youth and with seniors to create and maintain thriving, healthy communities.
- 4. Promote and protect education** - I believe all parents must have the right to access the best possible education for their children, from Universal Pre-K through High School. Our future is only as strong as our children and the schools that prepare them. I aim to do the following to promote and protect education in NYC: give all parents and all children access to what they need to succeed in school; protect school safety; work to channel appropriate resources to all district schools; streamline the delivery of support services to schools; and to ensure that accessibility for students with special needs.
- 5. Encourage job growth and economic development** - Job seekers and business owners can expect the following from me as a member of the City Council: I will work hard to support the thriving local business community; take on unfair regulations and excessive fines that weigh down the entrepreneurial spirit of hardworking Brooklyn business owners; even the playing field for everyone who is trying to succeed and to maintain their success; support local BIDs; organize community job fairs; support programs to partner schools and students with employers and career opportunities; and hold the Mayor and the City Council accountable to make sure community interests – and not the political classes – are put first. I aim to increase and improve job outreach programs for Veterans in the community.

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.

~~As a former staff member of a US Congressman, I respect the oath I took, and I have awlays upheld the highest ethical standards.~~

~~I am not in politics for the money. The reason that I am running for City Council is to support and give voice to the community that raised me. I want to give back to the neighborhoods of Brooklyn that have given me opportunities, as well as their trust and their support.~~

~~As a member of the City Council, I will make sure that I will work every day to honor the office and to honor the New Yorkers who entrust me with it.~~

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.