

Police District Council Election – meet the Candidates South Lakeview Neighbors – February 14

Concurrent with the Mayoral and Aldermanic Election to be held on February 28, 2023, the Voters in each 22 Police Districts will also be electing representatives to serve on the newly created Police District Councils.

On Tuesday, February 14, South Lakeview Neighbors (SLN) conducted its normal 2nd Tuesday of the month meeting (yes that was St. Valentine's Day) in the recently opened Paradiso Event Center located in the Athenaeum Center at 2936 N. Southport.

A little history – since 1974 various agencies were created to provide oversight of the Chicago Police Department. Most recently, that agency is the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA). None of the people serving on these agencies or COPA were democratically elected.

After the nationwide Summer 2020 protests sparked by the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, MN, several grass-root groups formed a coalition named Empowering Communities for Public Safety (ECPS). The ECPS and Mayor Lightfoot negotiated the language of the Empowering Communities for Public Safety Ordinance (ECPS Ordinance) and the ECPS Ordinance was passed by the City Council in July 2021.

The ECPS Ordinance created two new bodies

- 1) a citywide Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability (CCPSA) and
- 2) the Police District Councils

The newly-elected Police District Councils will have several key roles, they are:

- 1) Building stronger connections between the police and the community at the District level.
- 2) Development and implementation of Community policing initiatives.
- 3) Holding monthly meetings with residents to work on Community concerns about policing and accountability.
- 4) Working with the Community to get input on police department policies and practices.
- 5) To develop and expand restorative justice and similar programs.
- 6) Ensuring the CCPSA gets the input from the District Councils.
- 7) Nominating candidates to serve on the city-wide CCPSA which will have power to advance systematic reform, select new policy, Superintendent candidates and create Police General Orders.

Once elected, the District Council members will undergo training with COPA and the Police Board. The term is for 4 years and salary is \$500 per month. The 19th Police District is the largest area District in Chicago. It runs from Fullerton Ave. to Lawrence Ave. with natural east/west boundaries being Lake Michigan and the Chicago River.

All six candidates running for election were in attendance. The SLN meeting commenced with the reciting of The Pledge of Allegiance. The format allowed the candidates to present uninterrupted for 6-7 minutes followed by to 2-3 questions to that specific candidate.

All six candidates basically supported the 19th District keeping its current funding intact and hire the budgeted number of officers, but that there needs to be an allocation of those resources to dealing with mental health, homelessness and non-violent drug abuse issues.

The Candidates hit on many of the City of Chicago Police Department issues:

- researched based strategies are needed.

- elevate marginalized voices.
- increase mental health and social services to relieve Police from these duties.
- appropriate responses to homelessness and drug use related calls are needed.
- police training needs to be modernized, police need regular days off and access to mental health support.
- support for violence intervention workers
- the Community voice needs to be at the center of public safety and policing.
- Chicago cannot police its way out of crime and violence.

Vote for 3 candidates. Note that Schoenburg/Schaffer/Garcia are running as a slate known as “19th Together”; however, you do not have to vote for all three of them. The six candidates are listed in reverse alphabetical order with contact information and their top several endorsements:

1) Samuel Schoenburg – an attorney in private practice. He is involved with Cabrini Green Legal Aid and the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs.
Major endorsements- Aldermen Matt Martin and Andre Vasquez; 43rd Ward Democratic Committee; Indivisible Lincoln Square – www.19thtogether.com.

2) Jennifer Schaffer – former CPS special education teacher. She is involved in several community projects in underserved areas of the city and worked on the ECPS Ordinance. Major endorsements- Aldermen Matt Martin and Andre Vasquez; 43rd Ward Democratic Committee; Indivisible Lincoln Square– www.19thtogether.com.

3) Dan Richman – has worked over 30 years in Chicago radio overseeing stations mostly at WXRT and WSCR “The Score.” He is a member of Roscoe Village Neighbors board of directors and is a liaison with 19th District CAPS. Major endorsements- Aldermen Scott Waguespack and Tom Tunney; former Alderman Gene Schulter and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP).
Facebook page = DanRichmanfor19thDistrictPoliceCouncil.

4) Demerike Palecek – is a marketing director for a not-for-profit, a former member of the USAF, the Army National Guard and is currently the president of 46th Ward Democrats. She has organized mutual aid events throughout her community. Major endorsements – Alderman Tom Tunney and former Alderperson Michelle Smith; 40th Ward Democrats and Illinois Veterans for Change
www.demerikepalecek.com.

5) Julie Kaviar – chief of staff to Cook County Commissioner Scott Britton and was press secretary under Mayor Emanuel where she led outreach around the creation of CPD’s Strategic Decision Support Centers. Major endorsements – Scott Britton, Cook County Commissioner; Margaret Croke, State Rep; Northside DFA Democracy for America and 40th Ward Democrats. - www.juliekaviar.com

6) Maurilio Garcia – a market research and brand strategy consultant. He created an initiative through his employer that provides \$50,000 grants to local nonprofits. Major endorsements- Alderman Matt Martin and Andre Vasquez; 43rd Ward Democratic Committee; Indivisible Lincoln Square - www.19thtogether.com.