

## **SJ-R Questionnaire**

This questionnaire was sent to all candidates running opposed for Springfield alderman. Candidates were asked to keep responses to three or four sentences maximum. Responses will be published in the newspaper and online, subject to editing.

Name: Joe McMEnamin

### Education:

U of Illinois, B.S. Economics/History/English, 1975.  
SIU Law School, 1979.  
Enlisted, Non Commissioned Officer, and Officer Army military schools.  
National Defense University, 2010.  
US Army War College, 2006

### Political experience:

Ward 10 Alderman candidate, 1995.

### Community involvement:

Il Army National Guard, 30 years.  
Greater Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, 15 years.  
Chair, Government Affairs Committee 1997  
MacArthur Blvd Business Association.  
Springfield Inner City Older Neighborhood (ICON) Organization.  
YMCA soccer coach - 16 seasons.  
Middle school and high school Rec basketball coach.  
Downtown Kiwanis Club, 20 years. President, 2002.  
Downtown Springfield Inc, Image and Design Committee, 1997-2003  
Worship - Westminster Presbyterian Church.  
VFW Post 755, Officer.  
American Legion Post 32, Scholarship Fund Trustee.  
Many community organizations and memberships.

## ISSUES

1. What is the biggest issue facing the residents in your ward and how specifically will you address it?

ANSWER: The city budget, infrastructure needs, and problem properties are the most significant issues facing Ward 7 residents. Increased revenue from an improving economy combined with fiscal restraint will allow the city to address infrastructure needs. Enhanced Code enforcement and investment strategies will address problem properties, together with strong leadership and volunteerism from neighborhood associations.

2. The city could be facing a \$4 million budget deficit in fiscal year 2013. What types of cost-saving and/or revenue-generating measures do you believe are needed to balance the city's budget? Please be specific.

ANSWER: 80% of the city budget goes to payroll and employee benefits. Much of this spending gets locked by unaffordable multi year collective bargaining agreements. It was

irresponsible for the mayor and the city council to approve a five-year contract with annual 3.5% pay raises for our fire fighters, going into a recession. Social Security and military retirees who received 0% increases the last two years understand this. I will be a budget hawk on the Council and will restrain City employee pay and benefit increases. Within 60 days of becoming alderman, I will introduce an ordinance to ban abusive pension practices including “retirement week pay spikes” for our firefighters and police which permanently inflate pensions and rob our city of vital financial resources for years to come. All City real estate taxes now go to pay pensions of retired city workers, none to city operations.

3. Should the city continue to provide free yard waste collection twice a year? How, if at all, should the program be changed?

ANSWER: Yes, continue yard waste collection including with city crews to limit costs.

4. Should the city pursue construction of a 13th fire station in the city? If so, how would it be paid for?

ANSWER: Undecided.

5. Do you support a residency requirement, where city government employees would be required to live in Springfield?

ANSWER: Yes. I strongly support a city residency requirement, with a grandfather clause for employees already moved out, a 6 month grace period for new hires, and a waiver opportunity for hardship cases. Since its repeal in year 2000, over 600 of our 1700 City employees have moved out of town. Half of our firefighters and one hundred of our police have left. We want our police living in our neighborhoods, not in the bedroom suburbs. When sellers of real estate outnumber buyers, prices decline, property values fall, and R/E tax revenues suffer. There are 600 fewer families living in our City now because of the repeal of the city residency requirement ten years ago. We need to put Springfield first and require City employees to commit to this community and if they do not wish to do so then they can let someone else have that job with its generous benefits and future pension.

6. Should the city continue to pursue construction of a second lake? Why/Why not?

ANSWER: Yes. The land is substantially purchased. An earlier generation planned ahead for us. We should do the same for the next. We should not gamble with a vital and valuable local resource. Some western states’ aquifers are drying up, and these same states are negotiating for Great Lakes fresh waters. Global environmental changes and food production will focus attention on fresh water resources.

7. How would you make yourself accessible to residents and make sure you are truly representing the wishes of your constituents?

ANSWER: Will use aldermanic pay to open a part time Ward 7 office along MacArthur Blvd with evening and Saturday hours. Will publish a home phone # and an email address. Will mail periodic newsletters to Ward 7 residents.